

Mr. *CLAUDE*'s
CONFERENCE

WITH

M. de Condom, now Bishop of *Meaux*,

In the Presence of the

Countesses of *Lorge* and *Roye*, *Mad. de Duras*,
And several other Persons of Quality.

WITH AN

A N S W E R

TO

M. Condom's DISCOURSE of the CHURCH,

AND HIS

THIRTEEN REFLECTIONS

On a Writing of *M. CLAUDE*'s.

To which is added the LIFE and DEATH
of *M. CLAUDE*, who was Banished out of *France*,
and died at *Amsterdam*, 1687.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Tho. Dring* at the Sign of the Harrow in
Fleetstreet, at *Chancery-Lane-End*. 1688.

T H E

Author's Preface.

AMONG all the Points in Controversy betwixt us, and the Gentlemen of the *Romish* Communion, it is plain there is not any one wherein they think better of their Cause than this, which hath been started since our Reformation, Concerning the Church; and yet, perhaps there is not any one wherein they have less reason to think so. Were this groundless confidence observed to be predominant among the Vulgar only, who seldom look beyond the prejudices of their Infancy; or among the busy men of intrigue in the Age, who are ever raising their worldly-Advantages, as a Bulwark against the Truth; there would be no great reason to be surpris'd at it. But the most amazing thing of all is, that we continually meet with the same Opinion in persons that want neither Understanding, nor sound Sense and Judgment; and which otherwise seem men of Integrity and Sincerity; so that there is scarce any question to be made, but that they are verily perswaded of the thing, as a certain undoubted Truth.

Now for the undeceiving these Persons, it will, in my opinion, be convenient, not only to set their own Conceptions before them; but also to go back as far as the ground and original of those Conceptions, that so they themselves may please to make such Reflexions upon them, as they shall judge fit and necessary. The ground then of all this mistake is, that upon pretence of the Churches being a Society, they immediately suffer themselves to be possess'd at first with an Opinion, That we are to judge of it almost in the same manner, that we do of a Civil Society; and so never give themselves the trouble of enquiring into the differences by which these two are distinguish'd from one another. Hence they have fancied, that the Essence of the Church consists intirely in something External; and that as a man need do no more to become a true Member of a Civil Society, than only live in an outward observance of the Laws; so to become a true Member of the Church, no more was required, than barely an outward Profession of the Faith and Religion; and that there

was no necessity at all of any inward Virtues, such as Faith, Hope, and Charity. This is the very thing that hath made the Definitions of most of their modern Divines, who place it in a meer outward Profession, be entertained with Approbation and Applause. And when once these Definitions are received, they are under a necessity of looking upon, not any one part of these Professors, to be the true Church of Jesus Christ; but in general, the whole Body of Professors, whether they be good or bad men, just or unjust, hypocrites or sincere Believers.

From hence, by another unavoidable consequence, they are forced to conceive of the Church, not only as an exterior and visible Body, but as a Body distinctly, and certainly visible, to such a degree I mean, that a man might point out, without any danger of mistake, the particular men of whom it is composed; as plainly and distinctly, as you can point the Persons that make up any other Society; and declare without the least fear of mistaking your men, *such and such are members of it.* Such a visibility of the Church as this it is, that *Bellarmin* hath explained thus: * *The Church is a company of Men as visible, and as palpable, as the Citizens of Rome, the Kingdom of France, or the Republick of Venice.* So that his meaning is, that as the *French*, the *Romans* and *Venetians*, may plainly and particularly be singled out; so likewise may the Persons that make the Body of the Church be, as particularly, and with the same degree of certainty that they were. Indeed, if there be nothing besides a bare outward Profession required, to make men truly Members of the Church, This Profession is a thing discernable by the eye, in every single person; and thus the Church will be visible, so as that particular men may be plainly distinguished to be of it.

By another necessary and unavoidable Consequence, they were constrained to apply all the Promises made by God to his Church, whether in the Old or New Testament, to this visible and exterior Body. And being these Promises include the Churches perpetuity, that they might keep as close to their first Notions as they could, there was a necessity of explaining the Churches subsistence in this sense: That the Church must always subsist after the manner of a sensible and palpable body, so as to be the object of our sight, and discernable by all the World, even to a plain and positive distinction of particular persons. Hence it is, that they have drawn their so much boasted Succession, and which all their disputes run so much upon. Whereby they understand a continued train of Priests, one after another, in the same Episcopal Sees, and a continued train of people, making up the same Congregations; so as that both People and Priests always make profession of the same Religion, without any change or alteration, except it be perhaps in matters of Discipline, which are things that may very well admit of a change, without making the Church to differ from what it was before.

Then

* Ecclesia est
cætus homi-
num ita visibi-
lis, & palpa-
bilis, ut est cæ-
tus populi Ro-
mani, vel Reg-
num Galliarum,
aut Respubli-
ca Venetorum.
Bellarmin. de
Eccles. Lib. 3.
Cap. 2. Edit.
Lugdun. 1587.

Then carrying these Conceptions of theirs still further, they fancied, that as in order to the preservation of the Civil Society, an absolute Supreme Authority, to which all must bend, is necessary, because without such a one there would be no possible means of composing differences, or preventing Domestick quarrels; the same was likewise necessary in the Church: That in this, one Supreme and Absolute Tribunal must be acknowledged upon Earth; that without this and an intire obedience paid to it, even in matters of Conscience, Dispute would never be ended, nor Unity preserved, but at last things would come to such a pass that there would start up as many Churches, and different Religions, as Families. And this gave birth to their pretensions to Infallibility, and a blind implicit obedience to the determinations of Councils, without presuming to examine them at all.

Lastly, It is by all these prejudicate opinions, that the Gentlemen of the *Romish* Communion suppose themselves able to overthrow the Protestant-Cause, and make that of their own Church impregnable. The pretended Reformed Church, say they, cannot be this exterior body, always visible, and palpable, which must have continued in this state of visibility, and that without any alteration, ever since Jesus Christ, and the Apostles time, down to ours; because this is not above a hundred or sixscore years old, Therefore it is not the Church of Christ. This cannot shew a continued succession of Priests and People, Assemblies and Episcopal Sees, nor a profession of one and the same Religion without any variation, which is exactly what Christ promised. Therefore this is not the Church of Jesus Christ. This Church hath forsaken the Supreme Authority and Infallibility of the Church of *Rome*, and refused to pay obedience to her decisions; on the contrary she hath taken upon her to examine those Decisions, and hath done all that in her lay utterly to subvert this Tribunal, which is so necessary to the subsistence of the true Church: Therefore she is not the Church of Jesus Christ.

Of these Objections especially hath *M. de Meaux* made his Book to consist; and because this of mine is made publick only with a design to answer that, it is not fit I should prevent the reading of it in this Preface, nor forestal the judgment men may make of my Answers, when they see them at large. I shall think it therefore sufficient to say in general, by way of preparation, That all these pretended Principles which the Gentlemen of the *Romish* Communion take the freedom to suppose, are every one of them false and sophistical, and capable of being confuted more ways than one, because all built upon a false and vain foundation. For in truth what greater vanity can there be, than to go about to form an Idea of the Church, after the pattern of a Civil Society? The Civil Society is a humane contrivance,

vance, that owes its birth to natural instinct, under the Government of a General Providence, and is kept up and preserved by Rules of Justice and humane Policy. The Church is a Divine and Supernatural work, born only of the Blood of the Son of God, and animated only by his Spirit. His hands have made it, and his particular Providence watches over it, and preserves it. The Laws of the Civil Society do not properly respect any more than the outward man, they never make it any part of their End or business to regulate mens hearts, or alter the inclinations, or inward motions there; all within, they leave perfectly free, and are satisfied with an outward observation, which comes within the reach of man's power. The Laws of the Church do chiefly regard the inward man, their design is to sanctifie the heart, and fix themselves especially in the soul, which are effects above any power of man, and can belong to none but God only.

The matters in which the Civil Society is employed, are meerly temporal, such as we call the Goods of Fortune, Honour, Trade, the Exercise of Arts and Sciences, and other things of this kind, which may be cognizable by men, and brought under their Jurisdiction. But the matters in which the Society of the Church is concerned, consist in Mysteries conveyed to us by a Supernatural Revelation; in Laws imposed upon the Conscience; in the internal and external practice of Christian Vertues. Now all these things are Heavenly, Spiritual, unchangeable, having no dependance upon the will, authority, or declaration of men, but solely and immediately upon the will of God, and his declaring them to be such. To make a man a true member of the Civil Society, there is no more required than to seem so in the eyes of the world, who can pass a judgment only on the outward appearance, without being able to dive into the heart. To be a member of the Church, it is required that a man be so, not in the eyes of men only, but of God too, who as the Scripture expresses it, *trieth the very hearts and reins*, and will not be satisfied with a bare outside. The design of Civil Societies, is, that every man may according to his quality and station, enjoy the publick Priviledges, that his Personal Rights and Properties may be preserved intire, that each particular person may live quietly and peaceably under the protection of the whole Body; and these are Advantages not out of the power of men to give. The end for which the Church is designed, is everlasting Salvation, a Heavenly Paradise, the happiness of a life to come, which are all Advantages not within the power of men to confer. In the Civil Society, private men ought rather to suffer injuries that are put upon them, than disturb the peace of the whole Body, because such injuries may be endured, and yet not approved; and besides if they do it, the evil is not past all

all redress; for God who protects the innocent and oppressed, is able to right them, and recompence their losses with interest: In the Church it is far otherwise, where the Conscience must acquiesce, and a quiet submission cannot be given to a lye, an error, or an unjust thing, without approving it; and when it is approved, the evil is past redress, for God will avenge that fault, and nothing can make us amends for the loss of our Eternal Salvation: Besides, that the peace we hereby allow the whole Body, is so far from a Blessing, that it is the worst of Evils, being, in truth, no better than a War against God. I repeat it therefore once again, That there is not in the World a greater falsity, nor a more sophistical imposture, than the framing such a notion of the Church, after the model of Civil Societies.

The case standing thus, who does not perceive that all the conclusions from this false supposition fall to the ground, and utterly vanish? A man must not after this, fancy the Church to be a Body merely external, nor that all its essence consists in a bare Profession; nor that these Definitions given us of it, which run upon an outward profession of the same Faith, a participation of the same Sacraments, a submission to the same Pope, without allowing internal Graces any share, are good and valid definitions; nor that wicked men, worldlings and hypocrites, are Members of Jesus Christ's true Church. All this would do, if the question were concerning a Body, or contrivance merely humane, as the Civil Society is. But when we discourse of a thing that is the work and contrivance of God, and must bear some proportion to the excellency of its Author, we must affirm that Faith, Hope and Charity, and in one word, all the parts of true Regeneration are essential to it; and that this consists of the Faithful and Elect only, excluding thence the Hypocrites and Reprobate. We must not afterwards fancy the Church to be a body or company of men, visible at the same rate that Kingdoms and Commonwealths are; I mean, so as to distinguish plainly, and without danger of mistake, the very persons whereof it is composed. This were allowable, provided the Church consisted in an outward appearance, and bare profession only. But we must affirm it to be visible in the midst of dissemblers, as honest men are visible, when mixt with those that act otherwise; or to make use of a Scripture instance, as the good Corn is visible, tho mingled in the same field with Tares that look like it. The Promises of Jesus Christ must no longer be applied to all the exterior Body made up of a mere profession, nor must the perpetuity of the Church be imagined to mean a continuance of this exterior Body in the same condition, without undergoing any alteration; or a constant equal succession of Priests, People, Sees and Councils. This might be admitted, if all this exterior body
were

were the true Church of Jesus Christ, if that were not mixt with worldlings and wicked men, who change the Church as to outward appearances; or if it's Ministry were sure to be always intrusted in the hands of good men. But the case being otherwise, these Promises must be confined to the true Believers, and the Church conceived to subsist for ever in this mixture of wicked persons, and consequently, that it shall subsist sometimes among the publick corruptions of the Ministry, to which Almighty God sets bounds, as his wisdom sees fit for the preservation of his Children. We must not any longer believe a supream, visible, and speaking authority in the Church, to be necessary for putting an end to differences and disputes; nor upon this pretence allow Ecclesiastical Assemblies to be infallible, or forbid the faithful to examine their determinations. This might pass, if the Church were preserved, as Civil Societies are, by rules of humane policy; or if some temporal advantages were the only thing enquired after; or if the matters so determined, required only an outward compliance, as those in Civil Societies do. But now, that the Church is under a protection infinitely more effectual than all the wisdom of Man; now that Salvation is the thing in question, and a submission of Conscience the thing required, it must be confest, that since Divine Revelation ceased, there is no further need of any other supreme infallible Authority, besides that of the Scripture, which is the Churches Law, its Oracle, and perpetual Rule; a Rule plain and clear in what it expresses in all things necessary to be believed; plain and clear in its silence with relation to other things not necessary to be believed: It must be owned, that since God does not call men to Ministerial functions immediately, and by himself, it may happen that these Functions may generally be exercised by Reprobates; and to suppose that such people as these, who can challenge no share in God's Promises to his Church, are infallible, would be the most palpable absurdity in the World. We must acknowledg, that since it is so uncertain, whether the men that make up these Assemblies, are themselves really of Jesus Christ's Church, it would be not only rash, but wicked, to receive their Decrees implicitly, and submit to them without any Examination at all; because this were really to put our Salvation upon the venture, which ought to be infinitely dearer to us than any thing in the World, and which, if once lost, can never be made amends for again. Lastly, we must not upon these pretended Principles take up Prejudices against the Protestant Churches, nor tax them with Novelty, because they are not united to this visible, exterior Body, which was before the Reformation; or because they do not shew that uniform succession of Sees, and Councils, and the profession of the same Religion, without any alteration at all, and every thing as was practised before; nor pretend

There is likewise a testimony of *John Francis Picus Mirandula*, which flourished in the beginning of the Fifteenth Age, which he gives us in his Theoremes concerning the Faith. After having said something to their opinion, who make either a Pope or a Council Infallible, he adds these words: † *Others there are that oppose this opinion, by saying that Councils may err, and actually have erred, as for instance, the Council of Arimini, the second Council of Ephesus, that of Constantinople concerning Images, and that of Aix la Chapelle, about the marriage of Virgins that were forced. And if these (say they) have erred, others may err as well as they; whereupon some hold, that such General Councils as the Pope does not preside in by his Authority, may err, but those where he does, cannot. To which others return, that the Council of Ephesus was lawfully convened, that the Pope's Legates presided in it, and yet the Faith was subverted there, and the regulation of this very matter was it that moved Pope Leo to call the Council of Chalcedon. They say further, that their pretending to find out remedies for knowing when two Councils disagree, whether of the two a man ought to hold to, is an evident sign that General Councils may err.*

† Restite-
runt alii,
affirman-
tes errare
posse Con-
cilia, &
jam erras-
se, ut Ari-
minense
illud tam
celebre riter
damna-
tum, E-
phesinum
quoque se-

cundum, item Constantinopolitanum, de ponendis imaginibus, sed & Aquisgranense cujus sententia de Matrimonio raptæ Hieronymi determinatio præponitur. Inter ea, si hæc aberraverunt alia quoque errare posse dicunt. Quæ de re fatentur nonnulli, Concilia, seu five Universales Synodos, in quibus Autoritas Pontificis summi non præsidet, errare posse; non autem ea quibus intervenit. Instant illi ex adverso Ephesinum secundum legitimè fuisse congregatum, præsentibus etiam Legatis Pontificis; nihilominus in eversionem fidei agitatum, & in ejus correctionem à Leone Pontifice Chalcedonensem Synodum institutam. Rursus quia dari remedia videntur, dum Concilia discrepant cui videlicet standum adhærendumque magis, innuitur, aiunt, & apertè etiam significatur, aberrare Universalia Concilia posse. J. Fran. Picus Mirand. de Fide & Ord. Credendi, Theorem. 4. Tom. 2. Pag. 259. Edit. Basil.

It is certain then, that the Doctrine we now assert, when we affirm, that even the most numerous Assemblies are liable to error, that they may consist of such men as shall not be of the true Church, and consequently may fall off from their function, is neither a new Doctrine, nor any opinion we are driven to for the justifying our Reformation; but an old Doctrine, which the evidence of Truth hath always suggested to sincere and unbiassed men. So that if *M. de Meaux* had but pleased to reflect a little upon this, he would not have said, as he did, *That it was a Monster, the birth whereof was reserved for the time of the New Reformation.* It is convenient sometimes to be a little more advised and sparing in passing ones judgment. It would questionless be very foul to conclude from what hath been just now said against the absolute Authority and Infallibility of Ecclesiastical Assemblies, that we quite cast off all these humane Orders, for the external guidance and government of the Church. To fix any such opinions as this upon us, would be the unjustest thing in the world. Our Con-

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essions of Faith; our Discipline, and the Writings of our Authors, as well as our constant practice in all places, are a vindication of us in this particular, beyond all scruple or exception. First then, we hold the Ministry to be of Divine Institution, and consequently become necessary by *the necessity of a Command*; and that tho the use of it is not absolutely necessary by *the necessity of the means*, for the Existence of the Church; it is however of such excellent use and advantage in order to the preserving and propagating of the Church, that to go about to take it away, would be a manifest impiety. Secondly, We are of opinion, that in matters of Discipline relating to the publick, such as the manner and form of Religious Assemblies, of Administring the Sacraments, and others of this kind, these should be left to the determination of Ecclesiastical Assemblies, and provided they bring in no Rite offensive to the Conscience, or contrary to the nature of the Evangelical Worship, an absolute obedience is due to them. Further yet, We allow these Ecclesiastical Assemblies a power of Censuring private persons, and proceeding to the last and highest Censure, that of Excommunication. And although we make no question at all, but this power may sometimes be abused by them, and unjust sentences pronounced, yet we think that out of veneration for the Order, a man ought to suffer ~~him~~ to be executed upon him, provided this do not engage us in any thing that may wound a good conscience.

As for matters of Faith, Worship, and general Rules for ordering mens Manners, we are perswaded that these Assemblies continuing the subordination to one another, may not only attain to the knowledge of them, by the Word of God, but that they must and ought to do so, for preventing the encrease of error, and the preserving Gods truth in its genuine purity. It is part of their office and business to restrain the exorbitances of mens minds, to help the weak, and to the utmost of their power, cherish and maintain publick peace in the midst of this Society. But because on one hand the persons making these Assemblies are neither inspired, nor infallible, nor have any power over mens consciences; and on the other hand, because no body can be sure, that they are good men, and will discharge their duty faithfully, there being so many several sorts of by-respects that influence men, when the Spirit of God does not guide them; we think it a very faulty indifference, and a manifest slighting a man's own salvation, to receive their decisions blindfold, and upon trust, without any trial or examination of them at all. But still, though we think this examination highly just, and indispensably necessary, yet we think withal it is to be used with abundance of caution. Besides, that it must be undertaken in the fear of God, and with a disposition full of modesty, and Christian humility; besides that we must beg for grace from above,
and

and not presume upon our own abilities ; besides that, we must bring along with us, not only charitable, but reverent, and respectful thoughts of such Assemblies, and judg favourably of them, till we have manifest conviction of the contrary. Besides all this, I say, the ignorant sort of people must not be too rash in offering to interpose their judgments about matters which either are not plainly exprest in Scripture, or naturally and necessarily deduced from thence. They must satisfie themselves with using these two ways, The Scriptures being silent, And the clear and plain instructions to be met with there. From its being silent, they must learn to reject what it does not teach, for strange and novel Doctrines. For whatever is not in Scripture, is not of Divine Revelation, and nothing that is not revealed by God, can be the object of Faith. By the clear and plain instructions to be met with there, they must learn to embrace the Doctrines necessary for Salvation, and to reject all things contrary to the same, as dangerous and destructive Errors. And this is sufficient for the more ignorant sort of people.

As for other particulars, for which no certain rule can be given, neither from the Scriptures being silent, nor from the plain and clear instructions contained in it, nor by natural inferences deduced from thence, before they either receive them, or condemn them, they must endeavour to get information by such means as God hath discovered, and established in his Church ; and in the mean time entertain a good opinion of the Assemblies determinations. Thus they will preserve their Faith incorrupt, and sufficient for Salvation ; they will pay to Assemblies their due respects, and keep themselves in the peace and unity of the Church.

If the Gentlemen of the *Romish* Communion are not content with this, but still would have us believe whatever such Assemblies may determine blindfold, we must beg of them to consider, That to exclude thus all manner of amendment, is to open a mighty inlet to Error and Superstition ; 'tis an exposing believers to a manifest danger of having their Faith corrupted, and themselves damned ; in a word, 'tis perfectly to ruine Christianity, unless the goodness of God interpose with some remedy. Will not these Gentlemen, who are so ready at exclaiming against the inconveniences that may possibly proceed from our principle, at last open their eyes, and take a view of what their own hath actually produced already ? Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Indulgences, Merit of Good-works, worshipping of Images and Relicks, Service in an unknown Tongue, and a thousand other devotions, which have no great appearance of wisdom in them : These are the products of their pretended Infallibility, and all this they are forced to defend now, because they would not lose the point of an implicit obedience.

And now if I were speaking any thing here concerning the occasion of this dispute between the Bishop of *Meaux*, and me, or the Circumstances that went before, or followed after our Conference, the world will easily perceive I do it, because this Bishop hath already been at the trouble of giving the publick a sufficient account of them. One word only I must say, which respects one of our Auditors, *Mr. Cotton*, who no doubt would have received a better Character from *M. de Meaux*, had he been so happy, as to be known to him more particularly. *Mr. Cotton* is a Gentleman of great honour, and wants neither apprehension, nor judgment; he understands his Religion; and though dispute be no part of his business, is well versed in the main Controversies between us. If his modesty, or some other considerations prevailed upon him to say something that lookt like declining to engage in dispute with *M. de Meaux*, I do not think he ought to have taken his words in their strict and literal sense.

As for the difference between our two Relations, I leave it as *M. de Meaux* hath done, to the Reader's judgment. He hath observed very wisely, that let him say what he would of me, it was in my power to say the same of him: That all our Auditors were interested on one side or other; and that the world hath nothing at all to do with our proceedings. To all which let me add, that I will not give any occasion for any private quarrel with a person I honour to that degree, that I do *M. de Meaux*.

The only thing I need say more, is concerning the method I have observed in this Book. It is divided into Two Parts. The first contains an Answer to the Instruction given *Mademoiselle de Duras*, by this Bishop, the day before our Conference; together with an Examination of his Reflexions upon that Answer, beginning at the ninth, and going on to the thirteenth, inclusively. The second part contains a Relation of what pass'd in our Conference, with an Examination of *M. de Meaux's* Reflexions thereupon, which are his eight first. This method in my opinion is very natural.

And now, as I have made it my business to be very exact, and pass nothing in his whole Book over, without giving a direct Answer to it; so I hope that when he shall think fit to set Pen to Paper against me next, he will be as exact, and apply himself as close to the pinch of the Question; and not imagine, as men commonly do, that provided they can but pick up here and there some loose passages, and from thence start a few difficulties and objections, there need no more be done, and this must go for a full Answer. I beseech

seech God to shed forth his Blessing upon an undertaking, wherein the only Ends I propos'd to my self, were his Glory, and the Illustration of the Truth. Thus much I am encouraged to hope from his mercy; and that as he hath hitherto preserv'd his little Ship the Church, in the midst of the billows and storms of the world, he will still continue to preserve her, as he hath promised, ever to the end of the world.

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FROM THE

TRANSLATOR

TO THE

READER.

WHEN persons of M. de Meaux's, and Mr. Claude's Character engage, and in a Controversy so important too, as that between the Church of Rome, and those who have separated from her; Men must naturally be desirous to know the management and issue of such a debate. For, besides what expectations the reputation of their Learning and Judgment might raise, This is a Cause, that scarce any body in our part of the World can be supposed perfectly indifferent in. Every Reader must look on These, not only as Disputants, but Advocates; and even they, who design no more than the gratifying their curiosity by perusing such Conferences, do yet insensibly find themselves affected with some degree of Concern.

The particular Argument insisted upon here, is likewise of the highest consequence; for it cannot but be a mighty help and direction, to know exactly how far we are obliged to comply with the Churches Decisions in matters of Faith; In what Cases we may venture to depend upon our own Collections from Reason and Scripture; and in what we must renounce these in deference to a higher Authority; Whether Councils and their pretended Infallibility ought to silence all, even the most just scruples, against whatever they shall please to determine; or whether Almighty God have not ordered the matter so, that without some recourse had to our private Judgments,

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even These cannot be received as a Rule of Faith to us; but, all imaginable care, and an impartial examination of the thing always presupposed, the decisive voice does of necessity belong at last to a mans own self.

M. de Meaux, we see, took a great deal of pains by a previous discourse upon this Topick, to prepare his Proselyte for the ensuing Conference; and he was, no doubt, in the right, to pitch upon this as the main Argument for her Conversion: It being indeed the very foundation and support of all the points in dispute between us; the best and most cunningly contrived expedient, to make men first embrace, and then persevere in Error and Superstition. For Protestants are usually apt to be squeamish, and cannot digest Opinions contrary to Sense and Reason; they sometimes grow so bold too, as to question their Adversaries integrity: Now what can be more satisfactory in such Circumstances, than to be invited into the Communion of a Church, which you are told, in all, even her most absurd Decrees, is continually assisted with the unerring guidance of the Holy Ghost; and put under a happy impossibility of deceiving her Members, tho illnatured people should imagine her so wicked to desire and endeavour it. This then being fixed as a first principle, the understanding is sufficiently subdued; for humane reasonings to interpose afterwards, would be impertinent and sawcy; and so the harshest and most unpalatable Doctrines go glibly down, by the help of this excellent Vehicle, the Churches Authority and Infallibility.

The same method is observable among the Missionaries here in England, who after having tried us first with general schemes of the disputable points, and then endeavoured to establish some of them particularly, to little or no purpose; do now at last take sanctuary in the Churches Despotick power, and begin to seem sensible, that either this or nothing must stand them in any stead. The debate upon this Head first began to grow warm upon occasion of the Royal Papers, which (because bad money is not privileged to pass unquestioned, tho it have the King's stamp upon it) were considered with a Judgment and Modesty becoming both a sincere zeal for Truth, and a dutiful honour for the Person whose Royal Name they bore. The several Answers, Vindications, and Replies upon this Subject, have since been followed by M. de Condom's account of his Conference, as suiting very well the business then in hand: And when once the World had seen That, it was so reasonable Mr. Claude should be heard what he could say for himself, that I should not think this Translation needed any Apology, or Introduction, were it not for some Objections which I foresee it may be liable to. These therefore I am concerned to remove, that so the Book may be read without prejudice, and not expose men to mistaken notions of things, for want of a short, but necessary Advertisement.

In the first place I desire the Reader to take notice, that it is not to be expected Mr. Claude should in every circumstance express himself, as the Church of England would do at this day. The necessity of reforming from the Corruptions of Rome, was easily discerned in several Countries, and each National Church ha-

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ving sufficient power to reform it self, was just and wise in asserting that rightful Authority upon so emergent an occasion. But ~~tho~~ all did the thing, yet, all not conferring together, they did it not by the same methods, nor with like moderation and prudence. It was enough that they all agreed in the main points, and for the less material ones, that they maintained such a Charity, as not magisterially to censure or exclude one another for these little differences. This was the very way, whereby the Communion is still preserved inviolable among the Protestant Churches in all Nations, and is a mighty argument, that they retain the true spirit of Meekness and Christian Candor. Therefore in the writings of Forreigners, we must always make allowances for the Genius of that particular Church, whereof they are Members, and not be extremely nice and critical, except where we find a disagreement in some very substantial point. The Reformed Gallican Church and we are perfectly of one Judgment in all the most considerable parts of this dispute, concerning the Authority of the Church. As, That she hath no right at all to require an absolute and implicit obedience to her determinations; That the Scriptures are the only and perfect Rule of Faith; That every Man is concerned and obliged to examine by this Rule whatever is imposed upon him as an Article of Faith; and if he finds the Doctrine conformable thereto, readily and heartily to embrace, and adhere to it; but if evidently repugnant, by all means to reject it: That no Councils, even the most General, are to be received any further than they proceed in correspondence with this Divine Word; That they may, and actually have erred in deviating from it, and consequently their Decrees ought to undergo some Examination before a Man complies with them; But that, notwithstanding this possibility of failing, we ought to entertain very reverend and charitable presumptions in favour of such Assemblies; and, as not to cast them off without the clearest evidence of their having perverted the Truth; so, where no such evidence appears, to submit with the most respectful humility imaginable; looking upon them as excellent means for the preservation of the Christian Faith in its Unity and genuine Purity.

After so punctual an agreement in matters of the greatest consequence, what can it signify, if in some few others of less consideration, and more remote from the main business, there seem a small disparity? Mens Judgments must have some room left to exercise freely in, and diversity of Opinions in Circumstantials, like Divisions in Musick, may very well be admitted, without breaking the main Cords, or doing the harmony any prejudice at all. 'Tis confest, the Divines abroad have taken up some notions distinct from ours, and particularly concerning the Church, its Visibility, Ministry, Constitution and Discipline; and it might well seem strange, if Mr. Claude should so far forget his Education and Country, as not to scatter some of these in his Writings. But I hope Englishmen may enjoy the benefit of his Discourses, without being obliged to subscribe every sentence, or espouse every punctilio contained in them. Whether the Gentlemen of the Romish

persuasion relying upon the Authority of M. de Meaux his name, called in so potent an Auxiliary from beyond the Seas, out of a just diffidence of their own strength here, They best can tell: This I am sure of, that it was but Justice to Mr. Claude, and the Cause he asserts; that he should be turned into the field too: And to let the World see, that after all M. de Meaux's vain-glorious boasts of a victory, and bold defiance of all the Doctors in Christendom, neither the Champion, nor the Cause, however vilified by him, are yet so feeble, that they need fear to encounter this Goliath. As many as understand the difference between us and the Reformed Protestants in France, are sensible, that we stand upon the fairer ground by much for an engagement against the Church of Rome: But I was willing our Country-men should have the satisfaction of seeing, that it is M. de Meaux's misfortune to be reduced to streights, not only by a Church of England Pen, but by a Minister of his own Nation, who lay under some disadvantages which we do not; and that for all his Triumphant Preface before the Conference, That could no more escape a reply at home, than his Exposition has done abroad.

Another Objection against this Translation may be, That the Conference hath appeared in our Language already. I will not say it was in such a dress, as was by no means after the English Mode, and unworthy of so good an Original, for fear of provoking a severer censure upon the habit I have now clothed it in, to which I have reason to fear it is but too obnoxious. But setting aside all Reflections upon the defects of those who have gone before me, this single consideration is enough to justify and recommend the present attempt, that the Relation which was then Printed alone, is a very small part of the work. And when M. de Meaux's Narrative had appeared in such pomp, introduced by a long discourse upon the Church, and backt with so many smart Reflexions, M. Claude's memory might have suffered extremely, by concealing his abilities. And particularly, that notwithstanding the strain of confidence visible through all the Disputant's Writings of the Romish Communion, he could and did retort to as good purpose, and with as much advantage as Modesty and Reason usually have over Vanity. This may amuse unthinking people, who are apt to measure the weight of an Argument by the bigness of the words, and assurance of the Arguer; but the other only can prevail upon the Judicious and unprejudiced, and will force a conquest by its own strength.

One thing I have augmented this Edition with, which neither the former, nor indeed Monsieur Claude's own Original have taken care of, but 'tis what I thought highly necessary at this particular juncture. The unsincerity we have so often discovered in the late Advocates for Popery, makes us wish to take as little upon trust as may be. And therefore since our repeated complaints have been so ineffectual, I resolved to try if example would persuade them to any thing like Fidelity. For this reason all the Quotations from Authors have been carefully consulted, and at large transcribed by me in the Margent; where you will also find, if the
Press

*Press do me right, the Edition of each Book, and if two have been consulted, the difference of Chapters in each, as particularly in St. Cyprian; so that any man may now see at the expence of a very little trouble, whether he be imposed upon or no. The same exactness may be taken notice of in many of our late Learned Writers; but still there are a sort of men that will never suffer themselves to be run down for want of Recrimination, and therefore tax us with negligence in this particular also. Whether party better deserve this accusation, the Author of Pax Vobis, if they please, shall be the Test, who hath the impudence to repeat over and over so obvious a thing as an * Article of our Church, and always by his own additional Gloss, make it speak quite another sense, than ever was designed for it.*

* He says
Dialogue
2d, pag.
20. That

the Church of England in the 6th Article of their 39. says, We have no other Rule of Faith but Scripture, as each person of sound Judgment in the Church understands it, and what is proved by it; This he repeats, Dialog. 3. Pag. 30. and several times afterwards: whereas the words of the Article are these; *Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, * is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith; or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.* Where you see the Star, there was in the Form in Edward the 6th's Reign this Clause inserted, *although it be sometimes received of the Faithful, as godly and profitable for an Order and Comeliness.* But where are the expressions, or indeed the sense of his Citation in all this? And yet the force of all his Arguments turns so much upon this, that the very convincing him of un sincerity in this single allegation, is in effect an Answer to his whole Book.

As for the stile of this Translation, my care hath been to make it natural and easie, rather than elaborate and fine. As I did not enslave my self to a rendering every where Verbal, so I durst not take upon me to alter much, in order to being elegant. Having one of the Parties engaged in this Conference for an eminent instance, how shameful a disguise may be put upon things, and what material Changes may be made even in the main points, only for the greater neatness of the Discourse and Style.

I must own I have been a little bold in making this English Book to differ from Mr. Claude's French one in the method: For he, after his Introductory Discourse upon the Church, hath subjoyned an Answer to M. de Meaux's five last Reflections, so dispatching that Subject entirely, and at once: And likewise to the Relation of the Conference, annexed a Reply to the other eight, which concern That: But I designing chiefly the benefit of those, who either did not understand, or could not procure the French, and intending it for a direct answer to M. de Meaux in English, did rather incline to follow the method of that Translation; consulting herein the Readers ease, when he shall think fit to compare them both together. And because some time hath past since M. de Meaux appeared here, I chose rather to divide This, than suffer so long a delay as the finishing of the whole must needs have

See Answ.
to M. Com.
Exposit.
Pag. xxi.
&c. and
Vindicat.
Pag. 131

have occasioned. But that men may not be impatient for the remaining Part, that also consisting of an Answer to M. de Meaux's Thirteen Reflections, will, I hope, be sent after this very speedily.

Eng. Preface.

Exposit. of
Church of
Engl. &c.
Defence
of Expos.

Lastly, Because M. de Meaux hath rightly observed, that the Authority of the Relations will in a great measure depend upon the Relator's Credit, I think myself obliged to give this intimation to as many as shall peruse them; That they would do well to remember how many, and what notorious falsifications M. de Meaux hath been charged with lately, and that charge made good a second time, by evident proofs of the thing, notwithstanding all the pains taken by his Vindicator to bring him off; whereas Mr. Claude, for any thing I ever heard objected to the contrary, is rectus in Curia, clear and unsuspected of any such sophisticated indirect dealing. So that I mightily suspect M. de Meaux would not be able to do any great feats, if both sides were agreed to put the issue of the whole Controversy upon each Author's Integrity and Reputation.

I

An Answer to Monsieur de MEAUX's Book, &c.

SIR,

I Have a long time desired a sight of what you have now sent me. It was told me on all hands, That there was a Writing of Monsieur de Condom's abroad, containing a relation of what pass'd, in the Conference I had the honour to have with him at the Countess of Roze's; and some persons did even assure me, they had heard it read: But still I could meet with no body, capable of giving me the satisfaction I lately received by your means. This lays upon me a double engagement, both to return you my thanks for it, and at the same time, to gratify the curiosity you have to see what I wrote upon the same subject, the next day after our Interview. M. de Condom having profess'd it was not his desire, that what pass'd between him and me should be publickly talk'd of, I thought myself under an obligation to confine what I had written, to my own Study; And this hath been hitherto very punctually observ'd by me. But now, since he hath thought fit to give out Copies of his, I have reason to believe, that in this respect he leaves me perfectly to my liberty, and is well satisfied I should do the same thing with mine. I have too great an opinion of M. de Condom's Wisdom, not to follow his Example in this particular, and I promise my self from his Equity, that he will not find fault with me, for treading in his steps.

But because he hath been pleas'd to impart to us that Discourse also, which he had with *Mademoiselle de Duras* in private, the day before our Conference, you will think it convenient, that before I transcribe my Relation, I should first make some reflections upon That. Were this a discourse of such a nature, as common occasions or accidents are us'd to produce, where a man speaks without preparation or design, and delivers himself with all the freedom imaginable, I confess it were unjust to examine it strictly, and by rule. But seeing this was compos'd by M. de Condom, with a prospect of obliging *Mademoiselle de Duras* to change her Religion, and which seems a studied piece; a Discourse, which he hath joyn'd to the account of our Conference, as a considerable part of what pass'd in this matter: Lastly, a Discourse, committed to Writing, upon supposal that it may be useful to others, and, for that purpose made in some measure publick; I cannot forbear looking upon it as a work of

premeditation, and returning some answer to it accordingly. Besides, that you and I are concerned, as to what *Mademoiselle de Durus* hath done, to desire to know whether she had sufficient reasons to forsake your Communion, and embrace the *Romish*; and the examination of this Discourse will be a very proper means of clearing that point to us.

Confer-
ence with
Mr. Claude,
Page 2, 3.

Now it may be reduced to two principal Parts: In the first, *M. de Condom* makes it his business to shew, that the Catholick or Universal Church, which we profess to believe in the Creed, is a Church thus defined: *A Society making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his word*: Whence he infers, That it is a visible Society. He pretends also to make it appear, that to this Church, thus defin'd, belong all the promises found in Scripture. In the Second, He labours to answer an Objection, drawn from what happened to the Church of *Israel* heretofore, in which we often see the true Worship of God to have been changed and corrupted, and both the People and their Guides to have fallen into Idolatry.

These two Parts, *Sir*, we will prosecute in order, and by applying our selves to what is most material in them, will endeavour, by the assistance of God's Grace, to make the Truth so evident, as shall remove all difficulties.

The first Part of M. de Condom's discourse examin'd.

Confer-
ence, p. 2.

"Instead of granting the Ministers (says *M. de Condom*) to believe all the Fundamentals of the Faith, we shew that there is one Article of the Creed they believe not, which is that of the Universal Church. 'Tis true, they say with the mouth, *I believe the Catholick or Universal Church*, as the *Arrians*, *Macedonians*, and *Socinians* say with the mouth, *I believe in Jesus Christ*, and in the *Holy Ghost*; But as there is reason to accuse them of not believing these Articles, because they believe them not as they ought, nor according to their true sense; so if we shew the Pretended Reformed, that they believe not as they ought, the Article of the Catholick Church; we may truly say, that in effect they reject so important an Article of the Creed.

Conf. p. 3.

"You must know then, what is meant by this expression, The Catholick or Universal Church; and upon this I lay for my ground, That in the Creed, which was only a bare declaration of Faith, this Term must be taken in its most proper and most natural signification, and such as is most used among Christians. Now all Christians by the name of the Church, understand a Society, making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word. If this Society

“ciety makes this Profession, ’tis consequently visible, That this is the proper and genuine signification of the word *Church*, such as is known by every one, and used in common discourse; I desire no other witnesses than the Pretended Reformed themselves.

The sequel will declare, whether the scandal of dealing with that Article of the Universal Church, as the *Arrians*, *Macedonians*, and *Socinians* do, would not better agree with the Character of such as follow *M. de Condom’s* Opinion, than the Reformed Ministers. This we shall presently be able to judge of; and to that purpose four Questions must be examined.

The first is, Whether the sense of that Article in our Creed ought to be restrained (according to *M. de Condom*) to the Church here on Earth, or extended farther?

Secondly, Whether this be a good and sufficient definition of the Church upon Earth; *A Society making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his word?*

Thirdly, Whether this Church upon Earth be visible, or invisible? or whether it be both, considered in a different sense, and different respects?

Fourthly, To what Church the Promises of Jesus Christ do belong; whether to that defined by *M. de Condom*, or to that which we are about to define? These four Questions will include, not only all the plausible things *M. de Condom* hath said in this first part of his Discourse; but likewise all the other sophistical Objections that are usually put to us upon this subject.

Quest. I. *Whether the sense of that Article in our Creed ought to be restrained, (according to M. de Condom) to the Church here on Earth, or extended farther?*

In order to resolving the first Question, you will please, *Sir*, to give me leave, to explain briefly that Article of our Creed, concerning the Catholick or Universal Church, and how we understand it, that so you may be able to judge, whether *M. de Condom* had reason to accuse us of not taking it in its true sense: And this I shall immediately enter upon.

We think then (this being such a profession of Faith, as ought to embrace its object entire, and in the utmost extent, and not in any one part only) that by the *Universal Church* must be understood, not barely the visible body, or company of the Faithful at present upon Earth, but that body or company of all the Faithful, which have been, are, or at any time shall be, from the beginning to the end of the World. Thus the Universal Church is, That which is already triumphant in Heaven, that which is now militant on Earth, and that which is not yet in the world,

but shall be in succeeding Ages. All these three Churches do really make but one, because united together in the eternal purpose of God, appointed to know one and the same Word, to partake of one and the same Spirit, and to inherit one and the same Glory. They are but one Family, for they have the same Father, the same Rights and Priviledges, the same Hopes, and are called to the same Duties. They are but one body, under the protection and Guidance of Jesus Christ, their only Head, who is, as the Scripture says, *The same yesterday, to day, and for ever*. And this is our sense of the Church, called in the Creed, Catholick, or Universal.

Heb. 13.8

The Latitude we here take the Church in, hath displeased *M. de Condom*; he says we put a wrong sense upon the Article; and to understand it thus, is in effect to reject it. He is of opinion it should be confined to this part upon Earth, which he defines, *A Society making profession to believe, &c.*

† Ecclesia
tota hic
accipien-
da est, non
solum ex
parte, quæ
peregrina-
tur in
terris, à
solis ortu
ad occa-
sum usq;
laudans
nomen
Domini, &
post vetu-
statem
captivita-
tis cantans

But in the first place *M. de Condom* must allow us to tell him, that Saint *Augustine* however hath taught us to explain the Church in our Creed after this manner. That Father indeed went farther than we do, for he hath not scrupled to include in this notion, the Angels confirmed in Grace. Here † (says he, and 'tis in his very Exposition of the Creed, that he says it) *we must take the Church whole and entire, not only for that part of it upon earth, which praises the name of God from the rising of the Sun, unto the going down thereof, singing to God a new Song, since their deliverance from their former Captivity; but also for that other part which is in Heaven, and never was separated from the Divine presence, the Blessed and Holy Angels.* * The Body of Christ (says he in another place) is the Church, not this; or that Church, but which is diffused over the whole world; not that which is made up of men now alive, but consisting of those which have been before us, and those which shall come after us even to the end of the world. For the whole Church being composed of all the Faithful, in as much as all the Faithful are the Members of Jesus Christ, hath Jesus Christ for its Head, and this Head though exalted high in the Heavens, does notwithstanding still continue to govern his body.

canticum novum; verum etiam ex illa quæ in cœlos semper ex quo condita est adhæsit Deo. *Aug Enchir. ad Laurent. Cap. 46.*

* Corpus ejus est Ecclesia, non autem ista, aut illa, sed toto orbe diffusa. Nec ea quæ nunc est in hominibus qui præsentem vitam agunt, sed ad eam pertinentibus etiam his, qui fuerunt ante nos, & his qui futuri sunt post nos usq; in finem sæculi: Tota enim Ecclesia constans ex omnibus fidelibus, quia fideles omnes membra sunt Christi, habet illud caput positum in cœlestibus, quod gubernat corpus suum. *Aug. in Psal. 56.*

M. de Condom must likewise allow us to tell him, that the Catechism of the Council of *Trent* hath given this sense of the Church in our Creed.

|| The

|| *The Church* (it says, and 'tis in the very Explication of this Article) hath two parts, one of which is called *Triumphant*, the other *Militant*. The *Triumphant* is that illustrious assembly of the Blessed, and all those who have vanquished and triumph'd over the *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*, and who being now delivered from the miseries of this life, enjoy everlasting rest and felicity. The *Church Militant* is the company of all the Faithful yet alive upon earth, which is therefore called *Militant*, because they are engaged in a perpetual war with these most deadly enemies, *Satan*, the *World*, and the *Flesh*. Yet must we not from hence imagine that they are two distinct Churches, but as was said, two parts of one and the same Church, one of which is gone before, and already possess'd of its Heavenly Country. The other daily following after, till at length, being united with our Saviour, it shall rest above in Eternal happiness.

|| Catech.
Conc. Trid.
ad Paroch.
Par. I. Art.
9. Numb.
7, 8, 9. Ec-
clesiæ au-
tem dux
potissi-
mum sunt
partes,
quarum
altera Tri-
umphans,
altera Mi-
litans vo-

catur. Triumphans est, cœtus ille clarissimus, & felicissimus beatorum spirituum, & eorum, qui de mundo, de carne, de iniquissimo damone triumpharunt, & ab hujus vitæ molestis liberi, ac tuti, æterna beatitudine fruuntur. Militans vero Ecclesia est, cœtus omnium fidelium, qui adhuc in terris vivunt: quæ ideo Militans vocatur, quod illi cum immanissimis hostibus, mundo, carne, Sathana perpetuum sit bellum. Neque ideo tamen duas esse Ecclesias censendum est, sed ejusdem Ecclesiæ, ut antea diximus, partes duæ sunt, quarum una antecessit, & cœlesti patria jam potitur: altera indies sequitur, donec aliquando cum Salvatore nostro conjuncta in æternâ felicitate conquiescat.

Again, We must desire *M. de Condom's* leave to say, that the very Title of *Catholick* or *Universal* used in the Creed, does lead us to this extended notion of the Church. This to me seems evident for two reasons. First, that this Title is given the Church to distinguish it from all false Churches, which do neither exist always, nor every where, but spring up and die away in some particular places, and at some certain times, as having no found nor lasting principle. Secondly, that this Title was to distinguish it from particular Churches, which are but members of this great Body collected by Christ, and separated from the world, that he might sanctifie it to himself. Whence it follows, that when we say the *Universal* or *Catholick* Church, by this is plainly meant the Church intire, and at large, without exception, or limitation, either as to time or place.

Lastly, *M. de Condom* must allow us to tell him, that we are brought to this notion by what follows in the Creed, *The Communion of Saints*, which terms explain this of the *Catholick Church*. For the Saints are not only persons now living upon Earth, but those also that reign in Heaven, and those which shall be to the worlds end; and 'tis with all these that we are in Communion. If the Communion of Saints were to be understood of such only, as make profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern themselves by his word; This could be no other than an external Communion by living under the same

Ministry,

Ministry, and partaking of the same Sacraments, which good and bad men enjoy equally. And certainly this would fall far short of so great, so Majestick an expression, and consequently could not deserve a room in our Creed.

Confer-
ence, Pag. 2. But (says M. de Condom) in the Creed, which was only a bare declaration of faith, this term must be taken in its most proper and most natural signification, and such as is most used among Christians. I own it must be taken in its most proper and most natural sense, but even this supplies us with a fresh argument against him; it being certain, that the most proper and most natural sense is to take the *Universal Church* for the company of all those that are truly the faithful, separated from the world by the Word and Holy Spirit of God, according to the purpose of his Election from the beginning to the end of all things. I acknowledg the word *Church* when used in a Civil sense, as for instance when spoken of the people of *Israel*, does most properly signify an external and visible company, and so far I am of M. de Condom's mind, both as to what he urges out of the *Acts*, and from the *Septuagint Translation*. But still I assert, that this word when applied to a Christian Society, does not properly denote a visible Congregation, or an outward profession of the Faith, and no more; but chiefly an inward calling, a spiritual communion, and such as that outward is only a consequence of, and does depend upon. A man must be utterly ignorant of Christianity to deny this truth. The *Church* then is a name for something within, and not barely to signify what passes without; so that implying an inward communion, when the Title of *Universal* is put to it, it must needs mean the whole body of true and faithful Christians. By the same reason I affirm this to be its most natural signification. When we say in plain terms the *Universal Church*, nothing can be more natural than to understand the whole company of Gods children, as opposed to the men of the world, and *children of this generation*. Nothing more natural to Faith, and especially a Confession of Faith, than to interpret a term expressing the object of Faith, not in a restrained sense, which gives only a partial Idea of the thing; nor in an ambiguous sense, which gives a confused and doubtful one; but in a sense that shall be perspicuous and full.

As to the common use of the word, M. de Condom must pardon me, if I say there is a fallacy in his argument. For supposing it true (which really it is not) that all Christians of this and some ages last past had confined the term *Universal Church*, to the Church at present upon Earth; suppose the pretended Reformed (to use M. de Condom's own expression) did commonly understand this term so, yet still 'tis a trick to attempt to adjust the sense of the Creed, by that which some latter ages have fixt upon it. 'Tis just as if I should go about to explain the terms of our language by what will

be

be in vogue two or three hundred years hence. For who does not see that the acceptation alters, and words are mightily removed from their first and genuine signification?

What I have alledged from St. *Austin*, and the *Trent-Catechism*, plainly convict *M. de Condom* of a mistake either in matter of fact, or point of right. If the matter of fact deposited before be true, *That all Christians understand by the Church, a Society making profession, &c.* He is out in point of right, for St. *Austin* and the *Trent-Catechism* shew, that *the Church* in our Creed is to be otherwise understood. But if this Rule hold, that the word in the Creed must be taken in such a sence, as is most in use among Christians, he errs in matter of fact, for St. *Austin* and the *Catechism*, taking it as we see, 'tis manifest the Christians of their times did not understand it as *M. de Condom* does, of a *Society making profession to believe, &c.*

It is questionless more reasonable to say, that the term *Universal Church* in our Creed, should be interpreted in a way most agreeable to Scripture stile, but this very thing quite overthrows *M. de Condom's* pretensions. For the Scripture when speaking of the Church, as the Creed does, with regard to its Universality, does always mean the whole body of the Faithful, and not one part only. Thus St. *Paul* hath taken it in that excellent passage, *God hath given Jesus Christ to be the Head of the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* In the fifth Chapter of that Epistle, he repeats it no less than six times in the same sence: *The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: The Church is subject to Christ as the wife is to her husband. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle. Christ nourisheth and cherisheth the Church. This is a great mystery concerning Christ and the Church.* Thus again Col. 1. *Christ is the head of the body the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead.* So lastly Heb. 12. *Ye are come to Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven.* For the Apostle does not mean the Church Triumphant only, as *M. de Condom* would perswade us, but the whole body of those whom God hath enrolled in the Book of his Predestination, whether already taken up to Glory, or such as are already justify'd and sanctified upon Earth, but not yet glorify'd, or those whom he will call effectually hereafter, and justifie, in order to their Glorification.

I conclude this Question with one observation, which ought not to give *M. de Condom* any offence, because the greatest demonstration of respect to an adversary, is the removing every little objection made by him. I observe then that his Argument (which contains all this part of his Discourse) neither does, nor according to the rules of reasoning, can conclude any thing

Ephes. 22.
23.
Chap. 5.
Ver. 23.
Ver. 24.
Ver. 25.
Ver. 27.
Ver. 29.
Ver. 32.
Ver. 13.
Ver. 22.
Ver. 23.

thing at all. He would know the meaning of *Universal Church* in our Creed, *We must take this term* (says he) *in the most proper signification, and such as is most in use among Christians.* I grant it. Now all Christians (as he goes on) by the name of *Church* understand a society, &c. and for this I desire no other witnesses, than the Pretended Reform'd themselves. Who does not perceive that this concludes nothing? He should have said, *All Christians understand by the Church Universal, a society, &c. and of this I desire no other witnesses, &c.* Thus he should have delivered himself, if he would argue regularly. All this while *M. de Condom's* proof all through the sequel of his discourse runs not upon the term in his Proposition, *The Universal Church*; but on that single term *the Church*, between which there is a wide difference; for *the Church* may well be taken in a sense, that the *Universal Church* can by no means admit of. Indeed had *M. de Condom* said, *All Christians by the Church Universal, understand a Society making profession, &c. and of this I desire no other witnesses than the Pretended Reformed themselves,* we should have answered him, That the Pretended Reform'd never understood by the *Universal Church, a Society making profession to believe, &c.* because according to their Tenets, the *Church Universal* rose a great way further than *this Society making profession, &c.* So that we should immediately have put a stop to his Argument, and he could never have effected what he hoped for from it.

Quest. 2. *Whether M. de Condom's be a good and sufficient definition of the Church upon Earth, A Society making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word.*

By this decision of our first question, I think, Sir, it appears that *M. de Condom* had no ground for accusing us of taking that Article of our Creed concerning *the Universal Church*, in a wrong sense. Let us now proceed to the second Enquiry, whether *M. de Condom* have given a good and sufficient definition of the Church upon Earth, in calling it, *A Society making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word.*

Now this Question being of such mighty importance, that upon the determination of it, the whole Controversie betwixt us and the *Romanists* touching the Church, does entirely depend, I was amazed to see, that he did not think fit to clear it, either to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, or those other Proselytes for whom the perusal of this Discourse was intended. Methinks, when men go about to make Converts, they ought not upon pretence of saving them a little trouble, to decline any instructions that may be necessary for their satisfaction; and being persuaded, that the Church of *Rome's* pretensions are just, should not fear to have the
Grounds

Grounds of them examined, but suppose they will be found strong and impregnable. How comes it to pass then that *M. de Condom* was pleased to pass by so fundamental a Question? And how could he satisfy himself with barely propounding his definition, and saying only, that This was what all Christians understand by the name of a Church.

However I shall be bold to say, that this is neither all, nor indeed the main part of what Christians do, or ought to understand by it; and that his definition is defective by at least one half; to which therefore I shall oppose another, which I assert to be what all Christians ought to understand by the name of Church, *viz. A Society of such persons, as making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, do truly and effectually believe it; and making profession to govern themselves by his word, do really and effectually govern themselves by it.* Our business now is to know which of these two is a good and lawful definition; whether that given us by *M. de Condom* in agreement with the Doctors of his Communion, or this of mine, in agreement with all Protestants? That is to say, we are concerned to know, whether the nature and essence of the Church consist barely in externals and appearances; or whether something of reality be not required? whether Hypocrisy, and superficial Cheats can make men true members of the Church? or whether something of truth be not necessary also, to know whether wicked men, worldlings, and reprobates, provided they make an outward profession, and can but dissemble handsomely, are real members of Christ's mystical body, or whether this privilege do not belong to those that are truly the Faithful? Here lies the pinch of the Question, which in my opinion would have resolved it self, had but *M. de Condom* propounded it fairly: For methinks 'tis very hard to acquiesce so far in his definition. But not to insist on this first prejudice, let us examine the matter thoroughly.

I. The Scripture represents the Church to us, as the product and execution of God's eternal decree of Predestination, or Election; and besides it teaches us, that God in electing and predestinating men, does it not to a mere outward profession of Faith and Holiness, but to an effectual Faith, and true Holiness: And consequently, effectual Faith and Holiness are of the nature and essence of the Church, and not an outward profession only. The consequence is manifest; For the best way to discover the nature and essence of any thing, is to take it according to its own Author's first Idea and design; supposing that he does not (as we are all agreed God does not) swerve at all from his design in the execution of it. The Church then being God's own work, the surest means to discern what that is, will be to inform our selves of God's design, if

- Ephes. 1. 3, we can but find out that. Now this we find in the Election, *Blessed be*
 4. *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (says St. Paul in the name of the
 whole Church) *who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly*
places in Christ ; According as he hath chosen us in Him, before the foundation of
 the world. And a little after, He gathers together in one all things in Christ,
 both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him ; In whom we have
 obtain'd an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, &c.
- Verf. 10,
 11. To this relates that saying of Christ, *I pray not for the world, but for them*
which thou hast given me, for they are thine. Where by opposing the world,
 for which he does not pray, to those whom his father had given him, 'tis plain
 he understands the Church ; and his meaning is, that the Father hath
 given them to Jesus Christ, because it was his by his purpose of Election.
- Ver. 10. This appears further, from the words that immediately follow, *And all mine*
are thine, and thine are mine ; for this mutual reciprocation of Good between
 his Father and Him (if I may so term it) is capable of no other sense
 but this, in the sequel of his discourse. My Church are thine Elect, and
 thy Elect are my Church ; they who are mine, as my people, are thine,
 as thy Elect ; my Communion, and thy Election, have the same mea-
 sures, the same extent, and do both comprehend the same persons : So
 that the Election is nothing else but God's design and project of the
 Church ; and the constituting of a Church, is the putting that design of
- Psal. 65. 3. Election in Execution. *Blessed* (says David) *is the man whom thou chusist,*
and caus'est to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts. These Courts
 are the Church of God, and men enter into them only by vertue of God's
- 2 Tim. 1. Election. *God hath saved us* (says the Apostle) *and call'd us with an*
 9. *holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and*
grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began. We must
 therefore come to the knowledg of the Church by his Eternal purpose ,
 and to know that, we must consult his Holy Word. He hath chosen us
 (says St. Paul) *that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love*.
 Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself ;
 and, that we should be to the praise of the glory of his grace. He does not
 say a bare profession of Holiness, but a real Holiness ; he does not say an
 appearance of adoption, but a true adoption ; he does not say an external
 conversion, but an internal ; That is, such as may illustrate the glory of
 God. God hath predestinated us to a true Faith, and not an appear-
 ance of Faith ; to a sincere and substantial Regeneration, not to a shadow
 or colour of it. 'Tis past a doubt then, that a mere outward profession
 cannot give us a full definition of the Church ; but true Faith and
 Regeneration are necessary parts of the Idea we have of it.

II. The Scripture, when speaking of the Church with reference to God, gives it such appellations as can by no means be restrain'd to a mere profession, or allow us to think it can be composed of wicked persons. It calls the Church, (a) *Jerusalem which is above*, (b) *the Heavenly Jerusalem, the City of the living God*, (c) *the Holy Hill of Sion*, (d) *the Israel of God*, (e) *A Holy Nation, a peculiar people*; (f) *the inheritance of God*, (g) *the habitation of God through the spirit*, (h) *the house of God*, (i) *the temple of God*, (k) *His holy Priesthood, His spiritual house*, (l) *His royal Priesthood*, (m) *His purchased possession*, (n) *the people of God*. Tell me now, I pray, if the energy of these expressions is not admirably answered, by being reduced to a bare external profession? Would God have sent us a new *Jerusalem*, a new *Sion*, a new *City* from above, and make this up of Righteous and Wicked, Hypocrites and true Believers indifferently? Does not the Apostle understand it so, when he says, that (o) *Jerusalem is free, that her children are not in bondage*; i. e. those who are the Children by promise, that they shall not be cast out like Children of the bondwoman, but shall be Heirs; and that there is the same difference between this and the other *Jerusalem*, that was between the two Wives of *Abraham*, *Sarah* and *Agar*? Would God make him a new *Ta-bernacle*, a new *House*, a new *Temple*, and build it of holy and profane materials indifferently? *St. Peter* (p) did not intend it so, *You* (says he) *as lively stones are built up a spiritual house*. Would God separate to himself a new people, a new *Israel*, a new *Nation*, from all other Nations, and require from it no more than an outward profession, which alone works no regeneration at all? To shew that God himself never intended this, observe how himself speaks, (q) *This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days (saith the Lord) I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people*. We must take notice, that all these names above mentioned, are derived from the old figures of the Mosaical dispensation; this the very reading of them plainly testifies. Now this very thing makes directly against *M. de Condom's* definition: For as it is essential to a figure, to consist of something External and Corporeal, so is it equally essential to the thing figured, to consist of something Internal and Spiritual. The Church therefore is no longer a *Jerusalem*, an *Israel*, a people linked together by outward bands only; this would correspond well enough with the figures of the old Law; but it is a people, an *Israel*, a *Jerusalem*, united and compacted by the inward bands of the same Faith, and the same Sanctification. This very term [*the Church*] is of it self sufficient to confirm this truth; *M. de Condom* acknowledges the Christians had it from the *Jews*, which is true. He says the *Jews made use of it to signify the*

(a) Gal. 4.

26.

(b) Heb. 12.

22.

(c) Pl. 2 6.

(d) Gal. 6.

16.

(e) 1 Pet.

2. 9.

(f) Plal.

28. 9.

(g) Ephes.

2. 22.

(h) 1 Tim.

3. 15.

(i) 1 Cor.

3. 17.

(k) 1 Pet.

2. 5.

(l) ibid v. 9.

(m) Eph.

1. 14.

(n) 1 Pet.

2. 10.

(o) Gal. 4.

26. 31. 30.

25.

(p) 1 Pet.

2. 5.

(q) Jer. 31.

32.

Conf. p. 5.

visible

visible Society of God's people, the Assembly which makes profession to serve him. I agree with him in that too. He adds, That the Christians have kept it in the same sense. I am not of that opinion. This word, when applied to the figure, can signify no more than a visible outward Assembly; but when to the thing figured, it must of necessity imply something more, it must denote an inward community, a company, not of Bodies only, but Souls too; for it is not enough that a confession be made with the mouth, men must also believe with the heart unto Righteousness.

Rom. 10.
10.

III. This will be yet more evident, if you reflect on some other appellations given to the Church, with relation to Jesus Christ. For it is called, *His flock, his sheep, his spouse, his sister, his dove, his well-beloved, his body, a Body whereof He is the head, a Body that is his flesh and his bones, a house built upon him, as upon a Corner-stone, the sanctified in Jesus Christ, the Children which God hath given him, and other expressions like these.* Now who can ever imagine these glorious Titles should import no more than an outward profession? or that profane persons and reprobates can have any share in them? It is *his flock*, but what flock? *Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* They are *his sheep*, but how, *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.* It is *his Spouse*, and *his Sister*, but in what respect? *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast ravished my heart.* It is *his Dove*, but why *his Dove*? *My dove, my undefiled is but one, the daughters saw her, and blessed her. She is his well-beloved, but wherefore his Well-beloved? As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters.* It is *his Body*, but how *his body*? *The edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* He is *its Head*, but what sort of Head? *From him the whole body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of it self in love.* It is *his flesh and his bones*, but how these? *No man ever hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth, and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church.* It is *a structure built upon him*, but how? *In him all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord.* They are *the sanctified in Jesus Christ*, but how sanctified? They are *such as in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.* They are *the Epistle of Jesus Christ*, but in what regard the Epistle? *Written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.* It is *his People*, but what kind of people? *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness. They are the Children*

Luke 12.

32.

Joh. 10. 27.

28.

Cant. 4. 9.

Cant. 6. 9.

Cant. 2. 2.

Ephes. 4.

12, 13.

Ibid. v. 16.

Eph. 5. 29.

Eph. 2. 21.

1 Cor. 1. 2.

2 Cor. 3. 3.

Pf. 110. 3.

dren which God hath given him; But wherefore were they given him? To exhibit them one day, saying, Behold I, and the children which thou hast given me. Thou hast given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me. Can any man after all this grant, that the Church should be defined, *A Society making profession to believe, &c.* or imagine that Hypocrites belong to this mystical Divine Body?

IV. If we search the Scripture yet further, we shall find other Arguments in confirmation of this Truth. Among these I reckon the predictions concerning the Church of Christ, to be met with in the Prophets. Thus it is described by Moses; *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. There shall be (saith Isaiah) a high-way, and a way, it shall be called the way of holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, the fools, shall not err therein: No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.* And in another place, *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children, In righteousness shalt thou be established.* In the same sense Jeremiah speaks of it, *They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.* Ezekiel says as much; *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments.* In like manner Joel, *Then (says Joel) shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through it any more.* Likewise Zechariah, *In that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.* What can all these great and wonderful promises mean? This Circumcision of Heart? This way of Holiness where the unclean shall not pass over? This keeping out of Lions and ravenous beasts? This being taught of God? This universal knowledg, joyned with a pardon of sins? This pouring out of the spirit, which shall take away the hearts of stone, and change them for hearts of flesh? This Holiness of Jerusalem, so as to suffer no stranger, nor Canaanite in the midst of her? I say, What signifies all this, if the form and essence of a Church consist in a bare profession; and if this Communion can be composed of unjust, as well as just, of Bad as well as Good men?

V. St. Paul in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, endeavours to make us apprehend the Church aright, by resembling it to a man's body. *As the body (says he) is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one spirit.* I need not here observe, that by *Christ* he means the Mystical body of *Christ*, That is, his Church; this is manifest of it self, and he explains himself so afterwards: *You (says he) are the body of Christ, and members in particular.* All we have to do, is to enquire, what he makes to be the principle and band of this unity here attributed to the Church, and with respect to which he likens it to the body of a Man. And this is easily understood; for in his opinion it is the spirit, and consequently not a bare profession. But still it may be doubtful what Spirit this is: Is it a spirit of direction only, that attends upon the Clergy, and prevents their giving erroneous determinations, and publicly professing any such, how wicked soever the persons exercising this Authority be? By no means. It is the spirit which the faithful receive, and whereof Baptism is a sign: *For (says the Apostle) we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one spirit.* Thus you see the band and principle of the Churches Unity. The evident consequence whereof is, that inward regeneration is essential to it, and that as many as *have not been washed by, nor made to drink into this heavenly spirit*, cannot be parts of this body.

VI. But the Apostle carries on his Argument yet further; for he takes notice, that although God had put a difference between the members, as there is likewise in those of the Church; yet he had so qualified this difference, *That there should be (says he) no schism, or division in the body, but that the members should have the same care one of another; so that whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.* From hence it is plain, that according to St. Paul, there is as real an agreement between the members of the body of the Church, as there is between those of a humane body, without any contrariety or discord, and that this good correspondence is founded on that Unity which makes each part to have one and the same common interest. Now what true agreement, or common concern can there ever be, between the members of *Christ*, and members of the Devil? Or in St. Paul's own phrase, *What fellowship between light and darkness?* What continual enmity on the contrary must there needs lurk under the Covert of such an untoward seeming Peace, as a bare outward profession may make?

Every

Every one aims at advancing his own Master's honour, so that the sentiments, designs, and methods of the Servants must of necessity carry as great opposition as there is between the Masters they serve.

VII. In his Epistle to the *Galatians* he gives us another description of the Church very like this: *As many (says he) as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* Thus far respects Communion with the same Christ, which is the very thing that constitutes the Unity of the Church, and is the essential form of it; so that persons out of this Communion are not of the Church, because they have no part in the Churches Unity. If you would now know what kind of Communion this is, attend to what follows. *If ye be Christ's, Ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise.* So that St. Paul does not treat of a Communion consisting in a bare outward profession, but such a one as makes men Mystical Children of *Abraham*, and heirs of God. Gal. 3. 27, 28; V. 29.

VIII. In his Epistle to the *Romans*, he thought it not enough to say, *They that are in Christ Jesus, walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit,* which yet is intimation sufficient, what nature that Communion is of, that makes this Mystical Body of Christ the Church; but he goes further, and is express afterwards, *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Words of such strength as will not allow us to acknowledg wicked men belong to the Church unless we should make a Church that is not Christ's. If the Church formally, and as such, be Christ's, this must be true of all that are of the Church, and participate of that which constitutes it such. Now according to *M. de Condom's* definition, wicked men and reprobates may be of the Church; therefore in his opinion they may be Christ's. Notwithstanding St. Paul avers, that *they that are Christ's, live not according to the flesh; and that as many as have not Christ's spirit, are none of his;* so that he is of a judgment different from *M. de Condom's*. If an outward profession alone be the common band, and that which constitutes the Church, we are driven to maintain one of these three things: Either that such a profession does confer the spirit of Christ; Or, without Christ's spirit one may still be his; Or, that the things which make it to be a Church, do not yet make it to be Christ's. The first of these would be absurd. For what more so, than to assert, That a bare profession of Christianity confers the Spirit of Christ? At this rate every Hypocrite is a partaker of that Holy Spirit. The second, That one without Christ's Spirit may still be his, directly contradicts Saint Paul's assertion, which positively declares, That he who hath not Christ's Spirit, is not his. And for the third, That the things which make it to be a Church,

a Church, do not yet make it to be Christ's; it may be *M. de Condom* may not like this himself. I for my part look upon it as a very strange position. For can one say, that what precisely constitutes the Church, does not make it Christ's? This is as much as to say, that the Church is not his Body, nor his Spouse, nor his well-beloved, nor any of all those things the Scripture calls it. In a word, 'tis to say, that it is not considered in this quality any part of his concern. If *M. de Condom* frame to himself such a Church as this, let him at least give us leave to enquire why he does afterwards appropriate the promises to it. For what right can the Church have to these, if, as such, it be not Christ's, nor hath Communion with him? These two Propositions are evidently destructive of one another. If the Church as such be not Christ's, it has no share in his promises; if it hath, then it is his, as a Church. Let him chuse which he please; if the first, our Controversie is at an end, for to what purpose should we dispute of a Church, which he says, is Jesus Christ's; and yet is not his, nor hath any title to the promises? If the second, let him not talk any more of a Church considered as such, being constituted by a bare outward profession: For this not conferring Christ's Spirit, cannot make the Church his; or if it can, *St. Paul* does not say true, when he tells us expressly, *That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

IX. The sundry passages of Scripture concerning Hypocrites, who cloak themselves with such an outward profession, abundantly prove them not to be of Christ's Church. *He that saith, he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness.* And a little after, *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the Devil, whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.* Again afterwards, *He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.* *St. Jude* speaking of these Hypocrites, calls them, *Spots in our feasts of charity, clouds without water, trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the Roots.* Jesus Christ himself says, *In the last day he will profess unto them, he never knew them.* What colour then have we for making such members of the Church, which is Christ's Body? But that place of *St. John* removes all the difficulty, *They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, but that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.* What a plain difference is here made between *being among us*, and *being of us*; *being among us*, is proper for Hypocrites, that are mixed with the Faithful, and joyn in the same profession: *Being with us*, is sincerely and truly to be of the Church; for which something more than an outward profession is requisite.

X. We read in Scripture of a twofold Call, one by the meer Preaching of the Word, commonly termed an outward Call; the other by the Preaching of the Word, and the Holy Spirit both, filed an inward Call. Of the first our Saviour speaks, when he says, *Many are called, but few chosen.* Of the second St. Paul, *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified.* Now the Church, whose very name implies a Call, must needs have been the effect of one of these two just mentioned. But if defined by a bare profession, it cannot refer to one or other of these, nor can it answer the design of either. It does not fulfil the end of the first, for the Preaching of the Gospel does not call men to a meer Profession of believing Jesus Christ's Doctrine. A Hypocrite is so far from complying with this Call, that he rejects and mocks at it. It does not refer to the second Call, because the Spirit which calls with the Word, is a Spirit of Regeneration, and not bare profession. What Call shall we refer it to then? I know not any third, the Scripture mentions not any, and the nature of the thing will not admit of any. We can consider God in such a case but according to two different capacities, either as a Law-giver, commanding, exhorting, promising and threatening, or as an absolute disposer of Events, and so bringing to pass in us the thing he commands us.

Mat. 22.

14.

Rom. 8. 30

ἐκκλησία.

But whether commanding us, or whether working in us, he never stops at a bare profession; he goes on to the truth of Holiness and Faith, his Word enjoins it, his Spirit produces it. So that whether soever of these two Calls you suppose the Church to obey, it must either proceed to a true Conversion, or be no Church, for the proper and natural signification of the word is a *Called Society*, but no one ever called it to an outward profession, and no more.

XI. I suppose it is a maxim among all Christians, That Jesus Christ hath no more Churches than one, and that this on Earth, together with that in Heaven, make but that one; thus much we learn from the *Trent-Catechism* it self. A sure method then of discovering the true nature and essence of the Church upon Earth, would be to search into that in Heaven; for it is plain, were these of different natures, they would be no longer one, but two Churches of a several species. Thus much, I think, must be granted, and so likewise must the Conclusion I deduce from it, viz. That either the nature of the Church Triumphant, must exist in a bare profession, or that of the Church Militant cannot. If the Churches Unity here below, be a Unity of Profession, an external Unity only, and the internal one be but accidental, then the Unity of the Church above must be External too, and no more, and that Internal one resulting from the agreement of hearts and wills, no more essential to it, than to this below. Otherwise (as was said

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before)

before) they must be two different Churches. Let them be so kind then to clear this Point, Whether we must believe that a true Piety, true Regeneration, and true Holiness, are not really essential parts of the Church in Heaven, for to this hour I never heard any such thing maintained.

Joh. 17.
20, 21, 22.

XII. Those who desire to be informed what the Church, and its Unity is, need only consider what Jesus Christ says in that admirable Prayer related by St. John, *Neither pray I for these alone (his Apostles) but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. The Glory which thou givest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.* The Churches Unity is formed after the pattern of that between the Father and the Son. This is a kind of resemblance, a draught of that which hath some of the strokes, though not all the liveliness and perfection. It is therefore a Real, Internal Unity, a Unity not of outward Profession only, but in some sort of nature and essence, that is, of a Mystical nature and essence, a Unity of Regeneration, a Unity of the same Faith, and the same Righteousness; and to restrain this to a meer External Union, such as is common to both good and bad men, would not only weaken, but utterly evacuate the force of Jesus Christ's expression.

Joh. 6. 68,
69.

* Petrus ait, Domine ad quem ibimus? verba vitæ æternæ habes, & nos credimus & cognovimus, quoniam tu es filius Dei

XIII. To all that hath been now alledged, might be added almost innumerable passages of the Primitive Fathers, who whenever they spoke of the Church in its true and genuine sense, did always deliver themselves as we do. I will here instance in some of them: S. Cypr. in his 55 Ep. hath this passage, * *Lord, says St. Peter, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Shewing hereby that such as depart from Christ, perish through their own default; but the Church which believes in him, and constantly perseveres in the Truths she hath received, does never depart from him; and such as continue in the House of God are his Church. Such as want the substance and solidity of good corn, and are scattered abroad with the breath of the Enemy, like chaff with the wind, are not of Gods planting. With relation to whom it is, that St. John in his Epistle says, They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.* In another place, having said before, that the water mixt with their wine in the Eucharist represented the people, as

vivi: Significans scilicet & ostendens, eos qui à Christo recesserint culpâ suâ perire. Ecclesiam tamen, quæ in Christum credat, & quæ semel id quod cognoverit teneat, nunquam ab eo omnino discedere, & eos esse Ecclesiam, qui in domo Dei permanent. Plantationem vero plantatam à Deo patre non esse, quos vidimus non frumenti stabilitate solidari, sed tanquam paleas dissipantis inimici Spiritu ventilari: De quibus & Joannes in Epistolâ suâ dicit, ex nobis exierunt, sed non fuerunt ex nobis, si enim fuissent ex nobis, mansissent utique nobiscum. Cyprian. Edit. Oxon. 1682.

Where this is the 59th Epistle. the

the wine did the Blood of Christ, he adds, † *When therefore the water is mixed with the wine in the Chalice, the people are united to Jesus Christ, and the company of believers joined to him on whom they believe. Now this water and wine are so mixt in the Cup, that they cannot be parted any more: Whence it follows, that nothing can separate between Christ and his Church; that is, the persons that are in the Church, constantly and closely adhering to what they have believed; nor break off the inviolable love they bear to one another. So that wicked men and Hypocrites are not of the Body of the Church, seeing an outward profession is not sufficient to make men such.*

† Quando autem in calice vino aqua miscetur, Christo populus adunatur, & credentium plebs

ei in quem credidit copulatur & conjungitur. Quæ copulatio & conjunctio aquæ & vini sic miscetur in calice Domini, ut commixtio illa non possit ab invicem separari. Unde Ecclesiam, id est, plebem in Ecclesiâ constitutam fideliter & firmiter in eo quod credidit perseverantem nulla res separare poterit à Christo, quo minus hæreat semper & maneat individua dilectio. *Cypr. Ep. 63. Pag. 154. Edit. Oxon.*

St. Jerom says the very same thing: * *The Church of Christ is a glorious Church, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. He therefore that is a sinner, and stained with any pollution, cannot be said to be of Christ's Church, nor in subjection to Christ. It may happen indeed, that as the Church which had heretofore its spots and wrinkles, was after restored to youth and purity; so a sinner may come to the Physician, for those that be well, need not a Physician, but those that be sick, and so having his maladies healed, be made a member of the Church, which is Christ's Body.*

* Ecclesia Christi gloriosa est, non habens maculam, neque rugam, aut quidistiusmodi. Qui

ergo peccator est, & aliqua sorde maculatus, de Ecclesia Christi non potest appellari; nec Christo subiectus dici. Possibile autem est, ut quomodo Ecclesia, quæ prius rugam habuerat, & maculam, in juventutem & munditiam postea restituta est, ita & peccator currat ad Medicum, quia non habent opus sani Medico, sed male habentes, & curentur vulnera ipsius, & fiat de Ecclesia, quæ corpus est Christi. *Hieronym. in Ephef. 5. Tom. 9. Edit. Basil. 1537.*

St. Ambrose explaining those words of the 36th Psalm, *Let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down;* † says, 'As the Saints are members of Jesus Christ, so wicked men are members of the Devil. Let not the hand of the ungodly remove me; that is, Let not the actions of Sinners tempt me to depart from the way of righteousness; for we are apt to slip when we see the prosperity of Sinners, and so the hand of Sinners does in some sort shake and loosen us from the root of virtue. If wicked men are members of the Devil, there is little probability that hypocrisie should be able to make them members of Jesus Christ.'

† Et manus peccatorum non moveat me. Etenim sicut sancti membra sunt Christi, ita impii membra

sunt Diaboli. Manus peccatorum non moveat me; id est, Actus eorum qui peccant non me de iustitiæ statione dimoveant. Plerumque enim dum videmus peccatores prosperis abundare successibus, nutamus affectur & quasi quidam peccatorum manu de radice virtutis avellimur. *Ambros. in Psal. 35. Edit. Paris. 1529.*

But of all the Fathers, there is not any that treats of this Subject with such exactness and perspicuity, as St. *Augustin* does; a Man might compile a whole Volume of what he hath written about it. This Father explaining that of St. *John*, *They went out from us, but they were not of us.*

* Ex nobis
exierunt,
ergo plan-
gimus
dammum.
Audi con-
solatio-
nem: Sed
non erant
ex nobis.
Omnes
hæretici,
omnes
Schisma-
tici ex no-
bis exie-
runt, id
est, ex Ec-
clesia exe-

* *They went out from us, (says he) we lament the loss: But bear the comfort, they were not of us. All Hereticks and Schismaticks go out from us; That is, depart from the Church; but were they truly any of ours, they would not have departed. They were not therefore our members even before they went out, and if so, then there are many within, who, tho they have not yet gone out, are Antichrists. May we dare to assert this? Yes, why not? Let every man consult his own Conscience, to know if he be not Antichrist. The meaning of Antichrist is, contrary to Christ. Whence it is clear, that none but Antichrists can go out; for such as are not contrary to Christ, will by no means do so, for they continue in the body, and are reckoned among the members of Christ. The Members are never contrary to one another; The intire compaction of a body consists in having all its members; and you know what the Apostle says upon this mutual agreement of the Members, If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one be honoured, all shall rejoyce with it. Now if all the Members suffer in the grief of one, and rejoyce at the honour done to one, there is nothing that savours of Antichrist in this mutual agreement. Those*

unt. Sed non exirent si ex nobis essent, antequam exirent ergo non erant ex nobis. Si antequam exirent non erant ex nobis, multi intus sunt, non exierunt, & tamen Antichristi sunt. Audemus hoc dicere? ut quid? Nisi unusquisq; cum intus est non sit Antichristus. — Nunc interrogare debet unusquisq; conscientiam suam, an sit Antichristus. Latine enim Antichristus contrarius est Christo — Eos autem qui non sunt Christo contrarii, foras exire nullo modo posse, qui enim non est Christo contrarius in corpore ipsius hæret, & membrum computatur. Nunquam sibi sunt membra contraria, corporis integritas universis membris constat; & quid de concordia dicit Apostolus? Si patitur unum membrum, compatiuntur omnia membra, & si glorificatur unum membrum, congaudent omnia membra. Si ergo in glorificatione membri cætera membra congaudent, & in passione omnia membra patiuntur, concordia membrorum non habet Antichristum. Et qui sunt intus, certe sunt in corpore Domini nostri Jesu Christi, quandoquidem adhuc curatur corpus ipsius, & sanitas perfecta non erit, nisi in resurrectione mortuorum. Sic sunt in corpore Christi, quomodo humores mali, quando evomuntur, tunc relevatur corpus, sic & mali quando exeunt, tunc Ecclesia relevatur; & dicit, quando eos evomit, atq; projicit corpus, ex me exierunt humores isti, sed non erant ex me. Quid est, non erant ex me? Non de carne mea præcisi sunt, sed pectus mihi premebant, cum inessent. Ex nobis exierunt, sed nolite tristes esse, non erant ex nobis. Unde probas? Quod si fuissent ex nobis, permanissent utique nobiscum. Hinc ergo videat Charitas vestra, quia multi, qui non sunt ex nobis, accipiunt nobiscum Sacramenta. Accipiunt nobiscum Baptismum, accipiunt nobiscum, quod novunt fideles se accipere, Benedictionem, Eucharistiam, & quicquid in Sacramentis sanctis est. Ipsi altaris communicationem accipiunt nobiscum, & non sunt ex nobis. Tentatio probat, quia non sunt ex nobis. Quando illis tentatio venerit, velut occasione venti volant foras, quia grana non erant. *Augustin. Tom. 9. Tractat. 3. in Epist. Joannis. Edit. Paris. 1531.*

that

that are within, are the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this body is still in a state of healing, and will never enjoy perfect health and soundness, till the resurrection of the dead. These Antichrists are in the body of Christ like ill humours, the voiding of which eases the body: Thus when the wicked go out, the Church finds refreshment; and when the body throws them out, she says, these noxious humours are gone out of me, but they were no part of me; that is, they were not cut away from my flesh or substance, but oppress my stomach while they lay there. They are gone from us then, but be not troubled at it, they were not ours. But how do you prove this? St. John says, If they had been of us, they would have continued with us. So that you see, many people receive the Sacraments with us, which yet are not any part of us; They have Baptism administered to them, they receive that benediction which the faithful are sensible they receive truly and effectually, the Eucharist, and whatever is in the Sacraments. They communicate of the same Altar with us, and yet are no parts of us. Temptation discovers them to be none. When that arises, they are carried away, as with a strong wind, because they are not the true solid Corn. Nothing can be more express. Evil men, tho within the pale of the Church; That is, making an outward profession, yet are not of his Body, nor ought to be reckoned among his Members. These are distempered humours within the Body, but not at all of the substance of the Body, such as do but annoy the Body, and must be evacuated in order to give its relief. So that St. Augustine's sense of the Church was, That it consisted only of Righteous persons, and true Believers, and that inward virtues were essential to it, and ought to make a part of its definition.

1 Joh. 2.
19.

Observe again what he delivers in his Treatise of Baptism, against the *Donatists*. † “Whether evil men be seemingly within the Church, or “evidently out of it, still that which is flesh is flesh. Whether the barren “Chaff continue in the floor, or be scattered by the blast of temptation, “it is still but Chaff. Carnal and obdurate persons, tho they mix with “the Saints in the same Assemblies, are still separated from the Unity of “that Church which is without spot or wrinkle. Yet must we not despair of any, either such as being within the pale passes for Friends, “or such as being without, betrays a more manifest contrariety to us.

† Aug. de
Bapt. contra
Donat.
Lib. 1.

Cap. 17.
‡ Itaq. sive
intus ver-
sari vide-
antur sive
aperte for-
is sint,
quod caro

est, caro est, sive in arêa suâ sterilitate perseveret, sive occasione tentationis tanquam vento, extra tollatur, quod palea est, palea est: & semper ab illius Ecclesiæ, quæ sine maculâ & rugâ est, unitate divisus est; etiam qui congregatione sanctorum in carnali obduratione miscetur. De nullo tamen desperandum est, sive qui intus talis apparet, sive qui foris manifestius ad-
versatur.

And

∴ Baptif-
mus cor-
rumpi &
adulterari
non po-
teft, etfi à
corruptis
& adul-
teris ha-
beat, fi-
cut & ip-
fa Eccle-
fia incor-
rupta, &
cafta, &
pudica
eft, & i-
deo ad e-
am non
pertinent
avarit, rap-
tores, for-
neratores,
quos non
tantum
foris, fed
etiam in-
tus effe,
multis literarum fuarum locis *Cyprianus* ipfe teftatur. *Aug. de Bapt. contra Donatift. Lib. 4. Cap. 2.*

And lower in the ſame Treatiſe, ∴ “Baptiſm it ſelf cannot be corrupted,
“ tho adminiſtered to corrupt perſons; any more than the Church, which
“ is incorruptible, chaſt and innocent. To which Covetous perſons,
“ Robbers, and Uſurers do not belong; ſuch as *Cyprian* in many of his
“ Epiftles ſays, are not only without, but even within the pale. Pre-
ſently after, * “Such as live contrary to Chriſt, that is, in the breach
“ of his Commandments, tho they ſeem to be in the Church, are not
“ really ſo. We muſt not imagine they belong to that Church, which
“ *Jeſus Chriſt cleanses by the waſhing of water, and the word, to make of it a*
“ *glorious Church, without ſpot or wrinkle.* And if they be not of that Church,
“ whoſe members they are not, then neither are they of that, concerning
“ which it is ſaid, *My dove is but one, the only one of her mother.* For this
“ is ſhe that is without ſpot or wrinkle; and let them ſhew us how theſe
“ are members of this Dove, who have renounced the World, in words
“ only, and not in works. And a little after that, || I would aſk with
“ reſpect to every man’s preſent condition, whether ſuch men are now to
“ be reckoned for members of that Church, which is *the Dove, the Spouſe*
“ *without ſpot or wrinkle,* as *Cyprian* deſcribes in his Epiftle. Men that kept
“ not to the way of the Lord, nor the Heavenly precepts given for their
“ Salvation, that did not perform the Will of God, but wholly addicted
“ themſelves to worldly gain; proud, envious, contentious perſons, that
“ neglected Hooneſty and Faith, renounced the World in words only,

* Nec iſti Eccleſiæ devoti ſunt, qui videntur eſſe intus, & contra Chriſtum vivunt, id eſt, contra Chriſti mandata faciunt; nec omnino ad illam Eccleſiam pertinere judicandi ſunt, quam ſic ipſe mundat lavacro aquæ in verbo, ut exhibeat ſibi glorioſam Eccleſiam, non habentem maculam, aut rugam, aut aliquid huiusmodi: Quòd ſi in iſtâ Eccleſiâ non ſunt, ad cujus membra non pertinent, non ſunt in Eccleſiâ, de quâ dicitur, una eſt columba, una eſt matri ſuæ, ipſa eſt enim ſine maculâ & rugâ: aut aſſerat qui poteſt, huius columbæ membra eſſe, qui ſæculo verbis non factis renunciant. *Ibid. Cap. 3.*

|| Nos autem, ſecundum id quod in præſenti eſt cuiq; hominum, quærimus, utrum in illius Eccleſiæ membris, quæ una columba dicta eſt, & ſponſa Chriſti ſine maculâ & rugâ, hodie deputandi ſunt, de quibus dicit *Cyprianus* in Epiftolâ ſua quam commemoravi: quòd viam Domini non tenerent, nec data ſibi ad ſalutem cœleſtia mandata reſervarent, quòd non facerent Domini voluntatem, patrimoniorum lucro ſtudentes, ſuperbiam ſectantes, æmulationi & diſſenſioni vacantes, ſimplicitatis & fidei negligentes, ſæculo ſolis verbis & non factis renunciantes, unusquiſq; ſibi placentes, & omnibus diſplicentes. Quòd ſi eos in ſuis membris nec illa columba cognoscit, & talibus, ſi in eadem perverſitate permanſerint, dicturus eſt Deus, Non novi vos, diſcedite à me qui operamini iniquitatem, videntur eſſe in Eccleſiâ, ſed non ſunt, imò & contra Eccleſiam faciunt. *Ibid.*

“ not

“not in deeds; every one studying his own pleasure, and the diffat-
 “faction of all others. If this Dove refuse to own such for her Members;
 “if God shall one day say to such wretches, that continue in their per-
 “verse courses, *I know you not, depart from me ye workers of iniquity*; tho
 “they seem never so much to be in the Church, they are not in truth of
 “the Church, but act in direct contrariety to her. And in another place
 of the same Treatise; † “Such as oppose brotherly love, whether they
 “are plainly without, or whether seemingly within, are divided from
 “that invisible Assembly which Charity knits together. Therefore St.
 “John says, *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had*
 “*been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.* He does not say
 “they alienated themselves by going out, but that they were aliens, and
 “that this was the reason why they went out. Thus far this Father does
 not dissemble his opinion; He will by no means own any but the Saints to
 be Members of the Church, he totally excludes wicked men and hypo-
 crites; he uses no such nice distinctions between dead and living members,
 as our modern Controvertists do; in the contrary, he explains what he
 said, That wicked men were in the Church, by saying, that they seem to
 be in it; but they only seem to be so, for in very deed they are mere
 foreigners, and such as the Church does not acknowledg for hers.

† Etiam si
 discedendi
 occasiones
 ipsis de-
 sint, quam
 intus vi-
 deatur ab
 illa invis-
 ibili chari-
 tatis com-
 pagnis sepa-
 rati sunt;
 unde Jo-
 hannes dicit,
 ex nobis
 exierunt,
 sed non
 erant ex

nobis, nam si fuissent ex nobis mansissent utique nobiscum. Non ait quod exeundo alieni facti
 sunt, sed quod alieni erant, propter hoc eos exiisse declaravit. Aug. de Bapt. contra Donatist.
 Lib. 3. Cap. 19.

In the fifth Book of the same Treatise, he says, * “The Church is
 “described in the Book of *Canticles*, as *Christ's Garden inclosed, his Sister,*
 “*his Spouse, his sealed Fountain, his Well of living waters, his Orchard of*

* In Can-
 tico Canti-
 corum Ec-
 clesia sic
 describi-

tur, Hortus conclusus, soror, mea sponsa, fons signatus, puteus aquæ vivæ, paradisus cum fructu
 pomorum. Hoc intelligere non audeo nisi in sanctis & justis, non in avaris, & fraudatoribus, &
 raptoribus, & forneratoribus, & ebriosis, & invidis, quos tamen cum justis baptismum habuisse
 communem, cum quibus communem non habebant utiq; charitatem. — docemus. Nam dicat
 mihi aliquis, quomodo irreperint in hortum conclusum, & fontem signatum, quos sæculo solis
 verbis, & non factis renunciâsse Cyprianus, & tamen intus fuisse testatur. Si enim intus sunt, &
 ipsi sponsa Christi sunt, itane vero talis est illa sine maculâ & rugâ, & illa speciosa columba tali
 membrorum parte turpatur? An istæ sunt spinæ in quarum medio est illa sicut lilium, quod in
 eodem Cantico dicitur? In quantum ergo lilium, in tantum & hortus conclusus, & fons signa-
 tus, in illis videlicet justis, qui in occulto Judæi sunt circumcissione cordis: Omnis enim pulchri-
 tudo filiarum regum intrinsecus, in quibus est numerus certus Sanctorum, prædestinatus ante mundi
 constitutionem. Illa verò multitudine spinarum, sive occultis, sive apertis separationibus, forni-
 secus adjacet super numerum. Annunciavi inquit & locutus sum, multiplicati sunt super nume-
 rum. Numerus ergo ille Justorum, qui secundum propositum vocati sunt, de quibus dictum est,
 Novit Dominus qui sunt ejus, ipse est hortus conclusus, fons signatus, puteus aquæ vivæ, paradi-
 sus cum fructu pomorum. Aug. de Bapt. contra Donatist. Lib. 5. Cap. 27.

Poma-

Cant. 2. 2. " *Pomegranates*. This I dare understand of none but the Saints and Righteous persons; not of the Covetous, the Defrauders, the Extortioners, the Usurers, the Drunkards, and the Envious, which have indeed the same common Baptism with the just; but not the same Charity. Let them tell me how the men that have renounced the world in words only, and not in deeds, got in to this inclosed Garden, this sealed Fountain: For if these men are really in it, if these are the Spouse of Christ, how can that Spouse be without blemish or without spot? How can she be the beautiful Dove, when stained with such a parcel of Members as these? Are not these the Thorns in the midst of which she as the Lilies, according to that expression in the *Canticles*? In what respect then she is a *Lily*, in the same is she an *inclosed Garden*, a *sealed Fountain*; That is, with regard to those just men, who are *Jews* inwardly, by the Rom. 2. " *Circumcision of the heart*. For the King's daughter is all glorious within, and 29. " among these are the set number of Saints predestinated before the foundation of the World: But for that multitude of Thorns, whether their Pl. 45. 13. " separation be undiscerned, or whether it be open, they are added over and above, as the Scripture says, *they are multiplied above measure*. This number therefore of the just, called according to the Election of God, these 2 Tim. 2. " of whom it is said, *The Lord knoweth them that be his*, They are his inclosed Garden, his sealed Fountain, his Well of Living Waters. This 19. Holy Doctor thought it not enough to allow wicked men and hypocrites no place in his notion of the Church, and to make it up of just men only, but he does besides shew wherein the very essential form, that Unity which constitutes a Church, does consist; to wit, not in any thing external, but in the internal graces. In the *Circumcision of the heart*, and the *Glory within*: He goes farther still, and makes the Church to consist of the predestinated only, " The number, says he, of God's Elect, are his inclosed Garden, and sealed Fountain, that is, the Church of Christ. How shall we reconcile this Doctrine with *M. de Condom's*, who distinguishes between the Church of Christ, and the predestinate, as between a whole and it's part; who counts the reprobates in too, and blames us for restraining the Church to the number of God's Elect alone?

† Hæc
 verba be-
 ati Cypri-
 ani indi-

cant eum etiam intellenisse decorem domus Dei, quam domum ex unanimis & concordibus constare affirmavit, & docuit testimonio Prophetarum, & significatione Sacramentorum. In quâ utique domo non erant illi invidi, & sine charitate malevoli, qui tamen baptizabant. Ex quo apparet

paret & in eis esse posse, atq; ab eis dari posse Sacramentum Christi, qui non sunt in Ecclesia Christi, in qua non nisi unanimes & concordēs habitare Cyprianus ipse testatur. Neq; enim hoc saltem dici potest, tunc baptizare posse cum latent, quoniam illi Paulum Apostolum non latebant, quos in Epistola sua veracissimus testis notat, & gaudere se dicit, quoniam & ipsi Christum annuntiabant. De his quippe ait, siue occasione, siue veritate Christus annuntiatur, & in hoc gaudeo, sed & gaudebo. Quibus omnibus consideratis, puto me non temere dicere, alios ita esse in domo Dei, ut ipsi etiam sint eadem domus Dei, quæ dicitur ædificari super petram, quæ unica columba appellatur, quæ sponsa pulchra sine macula & ruga, & hortus conclusus, fons signatus, puteus aquæ vivæ, paradysus cum fructu pomorum. Quæ domus etiam claves accepit, & potestatem solvendi & ligandi: Hanc domum si quis corripientem contemplerit corrigentemque, sit tibi, inquit, tanquam Ethnicus & publicanus. De hac domo dicitur, Dilexi, Domine, decorem domus tuæ, & locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ. Et qui habitare facit unanimes in domo. Et jocundatus sum in his quæ dixerunt mihi, in domum Domini ibimus. Et, beati qui habitant in domo tua, Domine, in sæculo sæculorum laudabunt te; & innumerabilia talia. Hæc domus etiam triticum dicitur, siue tricennum, siue sexagenum, siue centenum fructum afferens cum tolerantia. Hæc domus est in vasis aureis, & argenteis, & lapidibus pretiosis, & lignis impurissimis. Huic domui dicitur, sufferentes invicem in dilectione, studentes servare unitatem Spiritus in vinculo pacis. Et, templum enim sanctum Dei estis vos. Hæc quippe in bonis fidelibus est, & Sanctis Dei servis ubiq; dispersis, & Spirituali unitate devinctis, eadem communione Sacramentorum, siue se facie noverint, siue non noverint. Alios autem ita dici constat esse in domo, ut non pertineant ad compagem domus, nec ad societatem fructiferæ pacificæq; Justitiæ. Sed sicut palea esse dicitur in frumento, Paulo Apostolo dicente, in magna autem domo non solum aurea vasa sunt, vel argentea, sed & lignea, & fictilia, & alia quidem sunt in honorem, alia vero ad contumeliā. Aug. de Bapt. contra Donatist. Lib. 7. Cap. 50.

“God’s House, in that he declares, and proves both by the testimony of the
 “Prophets, and the signification of the Sacraments, that this House is
 “composed of men living in Peace, and unity of Heart. So that those en-
 “vious uncharitable Wretches were not in this House, notwithstanding
 “they were baptised. And by consequence Christ’s Holy Sacrament may be
 “both administered, and received by men not in the Church of Christ; be-
 “cause, as appears by the Testimony of *Cyprian*, none but the peaceable
 “live in this Church. It will not serve the turn to say, they might bap-
 “tize while they were hid; they were not hidden from *St. Paul*, when he
 “said in his Epistle, he rejoiced, *that Christ was preached even by such*; whe-
 “ther in pretence or in truth (says he) *Christ is preached, and I therein do*
rejoyce, yea, and will rejoyce. “Upon these considerations I do not think it
 “rashness in me to affirm, that some are in the House of God, so, as that
 “they are themselves the very House, that which is said to be *built upon a*
Rock, called, his Dove, his only One, his beautiful Sponse, without spot or
wrinkle, the inclosed Garden, the sealed Fountain, the Well of living Water, the
Orchard with Pomegranates, and which hath received the Keys, the power of
binding and loosing; “this House it is, whose corrections if any man con-
 “temptuously behave himself against, he is ordered to be to us, *as an*
Heathen and a Publican. “Of this it is said, *Lord I have loved the Beauty of*
thy House, and the place where thine Honour dwelleth. He maketh men of one

Phil. 1.18.

Mat. 16. 18.

Matt. 16.

19.

Mat. 18. 17.

Ps. 26. 8.

Ps. 68. 6.

- Ps. 122. 1. *mind in an house. I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the House*
 Psal. 84. 4. *of the Lord. Blessed are they that dwell in thy House, they will be alway praising*
 Matt. 13. 23. *Thee; "and a world of such like passages. This House is called the good*
 Luk. 8. 15. *"seed, bringing forth fruit with patience, thirty, sixty, and a hundred fold.*
 2 Tim. 2. 20. *"This House consists of Vessels of gold and of silver, of precious stones, and*
 Ephes. 4. 20. *"incorruptible wood. To this House 'tis said, Bear up one another in love,*
 2, 3. *"endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And, the Holy*
 1 Cor. 3. 17. *"Temple of God are ye. For this consists of the true Believers, and holy*
 2 Tim. 2. 20. *"Servants of God dispersed throughout the Universe, and all knit to-*
 20. *gether in a spiritual Unity, by the participation of the same Sacraments,*
 20. *"whether personally known to one another, or not. As for the rest,*
 20. *"they are said to be in the House, but it is in such a manner, that they*
 20. *"belong not at all to the building, nor have any part of that fellowship*
 20. *"which brings forth the fruit of righteousness and peace. They are here*
 20. *"as the Chaff is among the Corn; for we cannot deny that they be con-*
 20. *tained in the House, because St. Paul says, In a great house are vessels, not*
 20. *"only of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and*
 20. *"some to dishonour.*

I cannot imagine how St. *Augustin's* sight came to differ so mightily from
M. de Condom's. If we believe the latter, by the Church must be under-
 stood, a Society composed of good and bad men; for he tells you, to such
 a Society only are those passages of Scripture applicable. Upon this rock
 will I build my Church. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that
 he might make it a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle, &c. If he refuse to
 bear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen, &c. Whatsoever ye shall
 bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven, &c. But if St. *Augustin* be to be be-
 lieved, we must take the Church in a quite different sense; for a Society
 made up of none but righteous persons, and true Believers; because to
 such a one, and no other, do these passages belong. In his Opinion the
 just alone are the House built upon a Rock, the Spouse without spot or
 wrinkle, they only have the keys and power of binding and loosing, 'tis
 their censures only that men ought not to despise, if they would not be
 looked upon as Heathens and Publicans. *M. de Condom* deduces his Argu-
 ments from these passages; St. *Augustin* deduces his from the very same,
 and yet their Conclusions are opposite to one another: All that we have left
 to do then, is either to correct St. *Augustin* by *M. de Condom*, or *M. de Condom*
 by St. *Augustin*, and of the two, methinks the latter is the more reasonable.

Upon this ground then I will once more introduce that Father speaking
 † Nec ideo tunc: † "We must not suppose that wicked men belong to Christ's body,
 putandi
 sunt esse in corpore Christi, quod est Ecclesia, quia sacramentorum ejus corporaliter participes
 sunt. Illa enim & in talibus sancta sunt, & eis indignè tractantibus & sumentibus ad majus ju-
 dicialium

dicium valebunt. Ipsi autem non sunt in illâ Ecclesiæ Christi compage quæ in membris Christi per connexum & contactum crescit in incrementum Dei. Illa quippe Ecclesia in petrâ est, sicut Dominus dicit, super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam meam. Illi autem in arenâ ædificant, sicut idem Dominus dicit, Qui audit verba mea, & non facit ea, assimilabo eum viro stulto, qui ædificat domum suam super arenam. Sed ne putes Ecclesiam quæ in petrâ est, in unâ parte esse terrarum, & non diffundi usq; ad fines terræ, audi ejus vocem de Psalmo gementis, inter mala peregrinationis suæ. Ait enim, A finibus terræ ad te clamavi, dum angeretur cor meum. In petrâ exaltâsti me. Videte quemadmodum à finibus terræ clamat. Non est ergò in solâ Africâ.-- Videte quemadmodum in petrâ exaltetur, Non ergò in eâ deputandi sunt omnes qui ædificant in arenâ. Aug. contra Literas Petilian. Lib. 2. Cap. 108.

“ i. e. the Church; because they do partake of the Sacraments corporally.
 “ The Sacraments themselves are holy in such persons, but they do but
 “ increase their condemnation, because they administer and receive them
 “ unworthily. Now they are not of that Company of Christ’s Church, Ephes. 4.
 “ which consists of his Members compacted together by bands and joynts, and 16.
 “ increaseth with the increase of God. For this Church is built on a Rock, Col. 2. 19.
 “ according to that of our Saviour, Upon this rock will I build my Church: Matt. 16.
 “ But those build on the Sand, as the same Saviour said, Whoso beareth 16.
 “ my Words, and doth them not, I will compare him to a foolish man, that built Matt. 7. 27.
 “ his house upon the sand. Now lest you should fancy that the Church
 “ built upon a Rock, is in any one particular place; or that it is not ex-
 “ tended over the whole Earth, observe her complaint in the Psalm, From Ps. 61. 2, 3.
 “ the ends of the Earth have I cried unto thee, when my heart was in heaviness,
 “ Thou hast set me up upon a rock. She cries from the ends of the Earth, there-
 “ fore she is not in Africa and no where else; she is set up upon a Rock,
 “ therefore those must not be esteemed of her, who build upon the Sand.
 There is some probability St. Augustin knew what he said, and yet you see
 a passage of Scripture, Ephes. 4. abused by M. de Cmond, in favour of his
 Church, made up of a mixture of good and bad men, which this Father
 explains of the Church of the Just only, as well as that other of St. Matt.
 16. Upon this Rock will I build my Church.

He teaches the same Doctrine in his Book concerning the Unity of the Church. || “ The Church is the Body of Jesus Christ, according to that
 “ of the Apostle, for His body the Church; whence it is evident, that such Ephes. 5.
 “ as are not accounted his Members, cannot obtain Salvation. Now the || Hæc au-
 “ Members of Jesus Christ are united by Love, both to one another, tem Ec-
 “ and to him their Head. A little further, answering the Donatists Cavils clesia cor-
 against the Catholicks, for having persecuted them, for having burnt their pus Chri-
 sti est, si-
 cut Apo-

stolus dicit, Pro corpore ejus, quæ est Ecclesia. Unde utiq; manifestum est, eum qui non est in membris Christi, Christianam salutem habere non posse. Membra verò Christi per unitatis charitatem sibi copulantur, & per eandem capiti suo coherent. August. de Unitat. Eccles. Cap. 2.

† Breviter respond-
ed quod
sæpe re-
spondi, aut
falsa di-
citis, aut si
vera sunt,
non ad
frumenta
Christi, sed
ad eorum
paleam
pertinent
ista quæ
dicitis.
Non inde
perit Ec-
clesia, quæ
optimo
judicio
ventilata
istorum
omnium
separatio-
ne purga-
bitur. Ego
ipsam Ec-
clesiam
requiro
ubi sit,
quæ audi-
endo verba Christi, & ea faciendo, ædificat super petram, & audiendo, & faciendo tolerat eos, qui audiendo, & non faciendo, ædificant super arenam. Ubi sit tritum, quod inter zizania crescit usque ad messem, non quid fecerint vel faciant zizania. Ubi sit proxima Christi in medio filiarum malarum, sicut lilium in medio spinarum, non quid fecerint vel faciant ipsæ spinæ: Ubi sunt pisces boni, qui donec ad littus perveniant, tolerant pisces malos pariter irretitos, non quid fecerint vel faciant ipsi pisces mali. Ibid. Cap. 16.

¶ Cum igitur boni & mali dent & accipiant Sacramentum baptismi, nec regenerentur spiritaliter, in corpus & membra Christi non coædificentur nisi boni, profecto in bonis est illa Ecclesia, cui dicitur, sicut lilium in medio spinarum, ita proxima mea in medio filiarum. In his est enim qui ædificant super petram, id est, qui audiunt verba Christi, & faciunt: quia & Petro consenti se Christum filium Dei sic ait, & super hanc Petram ædificabo Ecclesiam meam. Non est ergo in eis qui ædificant super arenam, id est, qui audiunt verba Christi, & non faciunt. Ipse enim dixit, Qui audit verba mea, & facit ea, simlabo eum viro sapienti, qui ædificat domum suam super petram. Ibid. Cap. 18.

Bibles, for having sacrificed to Idols; † "I return the same answer, (says he) which I have often done already, That what you say either is not true, or if it be, it concerns not Christ's good Corn, but the Chaff. The Church does not perish for this, which shall be thoroughly purged from these men at the last exact judgment. I enquire after the true Church, That is, where she is that hears the words of Jesus Christ, and does them; that builds upon a Rock; that thus hearing and doing, does yet bear with those that hear and do not, and so build up on the Sand. I enquire where the Corn is which must grow among Tares till the Harvest, *Matt. 13.* not what the Tares have done, or do. I enquire where Christ's Well-beloved is, she who is among the wicked Daughters, as the Lily among Thorns, *Cant. 2.* not what the Thorns have done, or now do. I enquire where the good Fish are, *Matt. 13.* which till they are drawn to shore, must be content to lye in the same Net with bad ones, not what the bad Fish have done, or now do. Afterwards again, || "Seeing both good and bad administer, and receive the Sacrament of Baptism, and the good only are spiritually regenerated, become his true Members, and make up the building of Christ's Body, 'tis plain that Church consists of the good only, to which it was said, *As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters; Cant. 2.* For it consists of those that build upon a Rock, that is, that hear the Word of God, and do it. For this Reason, when St. Peter acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, he said unto him, *Matt. 16. And upon this Rock will I build my Church.* This is not therefore those who build upon the Sand, *i. e.* they that hear Christ's Words, and do them not. For the same Christ hath said, *Matt. 7. He*

"that

"that beareth my words, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man, that
 "built his house upon a rock. And a little before the end of the Book,
 " * "There are many who communicate with the Church in the Sacra-
 "ments, yet are not in the Church. Else if when one is excommuni-
 "cated visibly, he be then only separated from the Church, when he is
 "restored to the Communion, we must say, that he is actually stated in
 "the Church again. But suppose his return be hypocritical, That he
 "bring a heart inveterate against the Truth, and the Church; must we
 "own that such a one is perfectly reconciled, and become a true member
 "of Jesus Christ, because the outward formalities of receiving him in,
 "have past upon him? God forbid. As therefore he is not really of the
 "Church, tho readmitted into the Communion; so if before Excommu-
 "nication, he had a Soul at enmity with the Truth, he was in truth se-
 "parated even then. And thus it is, that the good and bad seed grow
 "together in the same common Field until Harvest, that is, the Chil-
 "dren of the Kingdom, and the Children of the wicked one. If after
 all this, *M. de Condom* shall still maintain that an outward profession and
 participation of the Sacraments are sufficient to make men members of
 the Church; we may take the confidence to tell him, that his Authority
 is not yet advanced so far with us, as to be reckon'd of equal weight with
St. Augustin's.

* Multita-
 les sunt
 in sacra-
 mento-
 rum com-
 munione
 cum Ec-
 clesiâ, &
 tamen non
 jam sunt
 in Ecce-
 siâ: Alio-
 quin, si
 tunc quis-
 quam
 præcidi-
 tur, cum
 visibiliter
 excom-
 munica-
 tur, con-
 sequens
 erit, ut
 tunc rur-

sus inferatur, cum visibiliter communioni restituitur. Quid si ergo fictus accedat, atq; adversus
 veritatem & Ecclesiam animum inimicissimum gerat, quamvis peragatur in eo illa solennitas,
 nunquid reconciliatur? nunquid inferitur? Absit. Sicut ergo jam denuo communicans nondum
 inferus est, sic & antequam visibiliter excommunicatur, quisquis contra veritatem quâ convincit-
 ur, & arguitur, inimicum gestat animum, jam præcisus est. Ita fit, ut & semen bonum, & se-
 men malum utraq; per agrum crescant, usq; ad messem; id est, & filii regni, & filii maligni.
Ibid. sub finem lib.

In his Book against *Cresconius*, * Good and bad men (he says) may baptize,
 but God alone who is eternally good can purifie the conscience. The wicked are condemn-
 ed of Christ without the Churches knowledg, as having an evil and a polluted conscience,
 and are not even now in Christ's body the Church. For Christ cannot have such for
 his members as are condemned; and therefore they Baptize even while they are out
 of the Church themselves. God forbid such monsters should be reckoned among the
 members of the only Dove: God forbid such should enter into the inclosed garden,
 whose keeper can never be imposed upon.

* Tingere
 ergo pos-
 sunt boni
 & mali,
 abluere
 autem
 conscien-
 tiam non
 nisi ille qui
 semper est
 bonus. Ac

per hoc etiam nesciente Ecclesiâ propter malam pollutamq; conscientiam damnati à Christo, jam
 in corpore Christi non sunt, quod est Ecclesia; quoniam non potest Christus habere membra
 damnata, proinde & ipsi extra Ecclesiam baptizant. Omnia quippe ista monstra absit omnino ut in
 membris illius columbæ unicæ computentur. Absit ut intrare possint limites horri conclusi, cujus
 ille custos est, qui non potest falli. *Aug. contra Cresconium, Lib. 2. Cap. 21.*

In.

† Secunda
est de Do-
mini cor-
pore bi-
partito,
quod qui-
dem non
ita debuit
appellari.
Non enim
revera Do-

In like manner does this holy Father speak in his Book of the Christian Doctrine. *Tichonius* the *Donatist* having busied himself in laying down some Rules for the understanding of Scripture, *St. Augustine* takes them into examination, and this is what he says to the second of them: † *His second Rule concerns the twofold Body of Christ, that is an improper term, for in reality none are his body, who shall not continue with him for ever. He should rather have exprest it concerning our Lords true or mixt body, or true and counterfeit, or some such like term. For though hypocrites seem to be of the Church, they are so far from being with him to all eternity, that they are really not with him now. He might then be allowed to lay down this Rule, but he should have phrased it concerning the mixt Church.*

mini corpus est, quod cum illo non erit in æternum. Sed dicendum fuit de Domini corpore vero atq; permixto, aut vero atq; simulato, aut quid aliud. Quia non solum in æternum; verum etiam nunc hypocritæ non cum illo esse dicendi sunt, quamvis in ejus esse videantur Ecclesiâ. Unde poterat ista regula & sic appellari, ut diceretur de permixtâ Ecclesiâ. *Aug. de Doctr. Christ. L. 3. Cap. 32.*

* Septima
Ticonii
regula est,
eademque
postrema,
de Diabo-
lo & ejus
corpore.
Est enim
& ipse ca-
put impi-
orum, qui
sunt ejus

And afterwards, * *Tichonius* his seventh and last Rule is concerning the Devil and his body. For the Devil is the head of the wicked, and they in some sort his members, appointed to undergo with him the punishment of everlasting fire; as Christ is the head of the Church, which is his body, and appointed to eternal glory with him. As therefore in the first Rule, entituled, Of the Lord and his body, when the Scripture speaks of one and the same person, we must distinguish carefully, what belongs to the Head, and what to the Body; so as to this last Rule, we shall find things spoken of the Devil, which do not so much belong to Him and his Body. Now that Body of his is composed not only of such as are visibly without, but those also who though in truth they belong to him, yet continue for a time mixed with the Church.

quodammodo corpus, ituri cum illo in supplicium æterni ignis; sicut Christus caput est Ecclesiæ, quæ est corpus ejus, futurum cum illo in regno & gloria sempiterna. Sicut ergo in prima regula, quam vocat de Domino & ejus corpore, vigilandum est ut intelligatur, cum de una eademque persona Scriptura loquitur, quid conveniat capiti, quid corporis sic & in ista novissima aliquando in diabolum dicitur, quod non in ipso, sed potius in ejus corpore possit agnosci, quod habet non solum in eis, qui manifestissimè foris sunt, sed in eis etiam, qui cum ad ipsum pertineant, tamen ad tempus miscentur Ecclesiæ. *Ibid. Cap. 37.*

I make no doubt but so many passages of *St. Augustine*, together with those other proofs I instanced in before, for the resolving this question, may make *M. de Condom* a little uneasie, though he think never so well of his own principle. But in short, it concerns not only this Bishop, but all others that take this dispute into consideration, to know once for all, what mighty difficulties they must overcome, before they can establish the pretended Authority of their Church. That is to say in one word, it is fit they

they know that in order to compass this design, they must triumph over *Scripture*, triumph over Reason, triumph over the Fathers, but above all they must declare open war with *St. Austin* particularly. The Throne of *Rome's* Hierarchy is never capable of being set up, but upon these foundations, or to speak more properly, upon these ruins.

Qui. 3. Whether the Church upon Earth be visible, or invisible, or whether both together, considered in a different sense, and under different respects.

Thus much I think, Sir, may suffice to give a resolution of the second question, which was, whether the Bishop of *Condom's* definition of the Church upon Earth was a good and sufficient definition, *viz. A Society making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his word*; or whether it was defective, and required something else to be added to it. You see the necessity of handling this subject with some exactness; for it being our business to know what Society we must be of, to obtain Salvation, and both sides agreeing that it is the true Church; being it concerns us to know to what Society the Promises of Jesus Christ are to be applied, and both sides agreeing that it is the true Church: The first thing in reason to be done, is to form an abstracted Idea of the true Church, before it be applied to any particular subject, that so this may serve for a Rule, and direct us to know at least what that true Church is, which we enquire after. We know in general that there is one true Church; we know also, that this Church is a Religious Society; but when we come to define it particularly, every one knows his own method of doing it. This therefore is the first thing to be determined, not only to avoid equivocation, but to prevent a continual deviation, which may otherwise happen through the whole dispute, by means of a mistake in the beginning; and this having given occasion to the second question, the dispatching that already will mightily facilitate our enquiry into the third. The thing then to be examined is, whether the Society of true believers, who only are the Church, be visible or invisible, or whether both in some senses and respects.

For the resolution of this Query, I shall not say that this true Church being a Society of men, and so a body that hath its external order, as all other Societies have, hath likewise consequent to that a visibility common to it with all other bodies. Thus much is necessarily supposed, for the Believers are not Angels, nor invisible Spirits, but in this respect like the rest of mankind. But this visibility being supposed, we must further enquire, Whether there be not yet another, which gives it the Character of Jesus Christ's true Church; so that a man may say, That the body we see, and which

which is the object of our senses, as the true Church of Christ.

In this there would not be the least difficulty, had not God's design, as to his Church, been disturbed by the enemy of our Salvation. For since God calls true Believers only, and since, as we have already shewn, such alone constitute the Church; were it not for what happens from some other thing, there would not be among the outward Professors of Christianity, either Hypocrites, or Hereticks, or Superstitious, or worldly, or profane persons. And thus none but such as are truly the faithful being to be found among them, this outward profession would be a sure means, and an univocal Character to know the true Faith and Regeneration by, and consequently to know the true Church of Jesus Christ as such. So that we need say only thus much, That although the Church were not immediately visible by its inward and essential form, because none can immediately see mens hearts but God only; yet it would be visible by its external form, as by a sure distinguishing Character. For it might be seen by its Ministry and profession of Faith in Christ, and known to such a degree that a man might infallibly and positively say, *That is the Church.*

Matt. 13

But we all know, that as Jesus Christ sowed his good seed in the field of the world, so to use the expressions in the Parable, the enemy hath likewise sown Tares. That is, that with the true Believers are intermixt vast numbers of men, who have no more than the appearance and outside of Christianity, and so make the outward profession to be a note subject to mighty uncertainties and equivocation. This God hath permitted for reasons known to his own wisdom, and hence have risen on one side false Churches, and on the other false members of the true. I mean whole Communities who have wrongfully assumed to themselves the title of a Church; and single persons who wrongfully assumed the title of the Faithful. So that the Church now, like all other things liable to hypocrisy and dissimulation, cannot be truly known without much difficulty. And whereas, according to the nature of the thing, the Churches visibility and invisibility ought to lye here, that its essential and internal form cannot be seen immediately, and of it self, but may by the mediation of its external form; instead of this, they do now consist further, in a discerning between true and false, a distinguishing betwixt that which is real and sincere, and that which is counterfeit.

We must therefore examine, how this distinction is to be made, because in it consists the visibility or invisibility of the true Church. Whether we must make it between several external bodies, differing from one another, or between several persons externally incorporated into the same Body. I begin with the former, and affirm, that the discerning between several bodies,

bodies, depends upon some certain marks, or characters, whereby that body on whose side the true Church is, may be distinguished from another where it is not. I shall not now shew what those Characters are, for this is another dispute between the Church of *Rome*, and us, which we need not here engage our selves in.

It is enough we are all agreed, that such marks there are, and that by them this distinction must be made. That which most concerns us to take notice of, and which I desire you would observe with a very particular attention, is, that after we have found this Body, or external Society on whose side the true Church is, we may, and in reality do form to our selves two notions of it, one proceeding from a mere Judgment of *Charity*, the other from a Judgment of *Reflection*. By the Judgment of *Charity*, we look upon all within the Body to be true Believers, indifferently; For the searching of hearts being not in our power, but peculiar to God, Charity makes no distinctions, but supposes that things are in truth what they should be; and upon this supposition, we call all that Society *the visible Church*, speaking simply, and absolutely. By the Judgment of *Reflection*, having consulted the Rules of Scripture, and the light of Experience, we come to know that there are Tares mixed with the Wheat, and that it is past a doubt, that among these outward Professours, are abundance of hypocritical, superstitious, ambitious, and prophane people. Hence we correct our first notion, and term this Society, *a visible mixt Church*. Thus in the same external body, we distinguish two different Bodies, one of true Believers, which we look upon as the true Church of Jesus Christ; the other of hypocrites and worldlings, who have only the shadow, and shell of Faith and Regeneration, and consequently do not belong to Jesus Christ's true Church.

This is the original of all that ambiguity betwixt the *Romanists* and us. *M. de Condom*, according to the principles of Cardinal *Bellarmin* and *Perron*, and most of the Doctors of his Communion, does in this Dispute judge of the true visible Church, by that notion of *Charity*, which without making any difference, includes bad and good, true and false Believers. And we judge of the true visible Church, by that other, termed the notion of *Reflection*, which excludes hypocrites and worldlings, and confines it self to true Believers only. He supposes without offering any proof for it, that there is no other visible Church, than this whole Body of Professours, and that That of the true Believers is invisible; which we deny. He proves that the true Church of Christ, to whom the promises belong, is a visible Church, which we grant. We must take leave therefore to tell him, that he supposes, what he should prove, and proves what he ought to suppose; which must needs entangle the matter in dispute, and render it mighty intricate and obscure.

F

But

But what great matter is it (you'll say) as to this Dispute, whether a man judges of the true visible Church by the notion of *Charity*, or that of *Reflection* ? I answer, if the matter had concerned only the Duties incumbent on the Church, or exhorting and instructing men in those Duties, it would signify very little which of these two notions we followed. For the duties incumbent on both good and bad, are much the same, they all hear the same Word, partake of the same Sacraments, and are all under the same Obligations. But the present controversy does not concern the duties and exhortations to them, but the investing the Church in some particular rights and privileges allowed her, and applying to her the promises of Jesus Christ: So that it highly concerns us in this case, not to follow a notion which may lead us into mistakes, and give away these privileges and promises to men that have no manner of right to them. It nearly concerns us not to follow a notion, which may occasion our falling into error, under pretence of that name, *the Church*. There is an absolute necessity of clearing an ambiguity, which if not cleared, may prejudice our Conscience, and put our Salvation upon a hazard.

Now, *Sir*, let us see I beseech you, whether of these two notions is rather to be received in this dispute? And this will easily appear, if we consider; That the notion followed by *M. de Condom* is grossly false in one of its parts, as taking for true Believers, persons who really are not so, and can pretend to truth no further, than as it is conformable to this second notion: That it is not grounded upon an exact knowledge of its object, but merely upon a charitable supposition, which if nicely look'd into, is not true it self: And so there can be no probable argument for allowing evil men and hypocrites a part in Christ's Promises, *Those false plants, which our heavenly father hath not planted, Those tares which the Lord hath not sown in his field, but the enemy rose by night to cast in privily*, Men not at all concerned in that Idea of the true Church which Scripture gives us, and consequently not of it. In a word, this will easily appear, that the notion we follow is the most exact, the most certain, the most agreeable to the Idea's given in Scripture, and the only one that can bear any proportion to the Promises of Jesus Christ, and the dignity of the true Church.

But it may be said, Was not *M. de Condom* in the right, to say, there was not actually any visible Church, but that which he defines, *A Society making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his word*? And so no other than that which comprehends good and bad, true Believers and Hypocrites? And was it not fair then to make use of this notion in the Controversy? I answer, the true Church consisting of true Believers only, is not indeed visible, by any certain and distinct sight we can have of it, so as to affirm positively and personally, such or such are of

Matt. 15.
Matt. 13.

of the true Church. When we would carry on this distinction to particular men, disguise and hypocrisie put a stop to it, so that in this sense the true Church will always continue invisible, till Jesus Christ come to make a full and perfect separation betwixt his own Corn and the Enemies Tares, which shall not be done till the end of the World. Thus it is not visible, not only immediately by its internal form in mens hearts, but even by these external Characters, as to certain and distinct visibility, because dissimulation and deceit often makes these marks to be doubtful. All this I grant.

But for all this, we may and must say, that the true Church is visible, truly visible, in other senses and respects. For first of all; it cannot be denied that it is visible at least materially, as they say, because the true Believers that appear visibly in publick Assemblies, partake of the same Sacraments, and live in the same external Order: The faithful do not conceal themselves, nor decline the Holy Exercises of Religion, but on the contrary frequent them, and shew themselves more than other men, remembering that of St. Paul, *Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together.* Besides, It is plain, that tho the true Church be mixt with wicked men in the same profession, yet is it visible in this very mixture, as *the wheat is visible, tho in the same field with the tares, and the good fish in the same net with the bad,* according to the parables in the Gospel; or as true Friends are visible, tho mixt with dissemblers and flatterers. This mixture indeed hinders us from an exact distinction of persons, but still we may with great certainty distinguish and discern two sorts of persons. We are not sure which particular men are true Believers, and which Hypocrites, but we are sure that there are true Believers as well as Hypocrites; and this is enough to prove the Church visible, according to the Scriptures, and St. Austin's Hypothesis. Nay, I will go further yet; for 'tis true that upon some occasions Hypocrites do plainly distinguish themselves from true Believers, and upon some other occasions true Believers do plainly make a personal distinction of themselves from Hypocrites. For instance, when we see men drowned in vices inconsistent with true Faith, when we see them throw themselves into Superstitions and Errors, that are contrary to the true Doctrine and Worship of God, tho they abide still in the same Congregations with others, and communicate in the same Sacraments; yet this makes a negative distinction, so as we may say, these are not the true Believers, that is, not of the true Church. On the other side, when we see men undergo long sharp tryals, without being removed, either from the profession of the true Doctrine and Worship, or from that of Righteousness and Holiness, in this respect here is made a positive distinction, and such as makes us acknowledg, that these persons are of the true Church of

Heb. 10.

25.

Matt. 13.

Jesus Christ. I confess these distinctions are not always, either so certain as never to admit of mistakes, nor so universal as not to confound one with another. For a man may judg rashly of both sorts, either for want of knowing mens particular circumstances, and the motives they went upon; or some other way; and it is never seen, that all Hypocrites discover themselves at once. But however, there is great use to be made of this distinction, and such a visibility of the true Church results from it, as is in some sort personal, according to our Hypothesis.

Confer.
page 10.

Rom. 12.
4.

* I will
here set
down the
whole Ar-
ticle so
give the
Reader

more full Satisfaction in this matter. Credimus summo studio & prudentiâ discernendam esse veram Ecclesiam, cujus nomine nimium multi abutuntur. Itaq; affirmamus ex Dei verbo, Ecclesiam esse fidelium cœtum, qui in verbo Dei sequendo, & purâ religione colendâ consentiunt, in quâ etiam quotidie proficiunt; crescentes & confirmantes se mutuò in Dei timore, ut qui quotidiano progressu & profectu indigeant, quos etiam quantumcunq; promoveant, oporteat tamen assidue ad remissionem peccatorum confugere. Minimè tamen inficiamur, quin fidelibus hypocritæ & reprobi multi sint permixti, sed quorum malitia Ecclesiæ nomen delere non possit. Harmonia Confession. Sect. 10. Gallic. Confess. Edit. Genev. 1531.

Now, Sir, you see, whether *M. de Condom* was in the right to take it for granted, as if it were a certain truth, that there was no visible Church, but such a one as he defined, that comprehends good and bad, true Believers and Worldlings, contrary to the Scriptures, and St. *Augustin's* sense. You see too whether he was in the right, to maintain in this first part of his discourse, that we deny the Churches visibility. *The Pretended Reform'd* (says he) *will not have the visible Church to be that which is called Jesus Christ's Body. Which is then that Body where God hath established some Apostles? &c. Which is that Body where God hath placed several Members, and different Graces, the Grace of Ministry, the Grace of Teaching, the Grace of Exhortation and Consolation, the Grace of Ruling? Which, I say, is that Body, if it be not the visible Church?* We never denied the visible Church upon Earth to be Christ's Body; not the whole Body indeed, for there is one part of it collected in Heaven, and another not yet in being, but still that part upon Earth is Jesus Christ's Body, so the Scripture calls it, and we are so far from thinking as he saies, that quite contrary, we prove Hypocrites and Worldlings to be really no part of the true visible Church, by this very Argument, that it is called in Scripture the Body of Jesus Christ. For this reason the visible Church is thus defined in the 27th Article of our Confession of Faith. * *The company of the Faithful agreeing to follow the Word of God, and that pure Religion grounded thereon, and who constantly make proficiency therein.* Now, this Company of the Faithful thus described, is, and is called *the Body of Jesus Christ*. If *M. de Condom* had been at the pains to read *Calvin*, he would find him speaking of the visible Church,

in the 4th Book of his Institutions, Chap. 1. thus, || *It is no ordinary commendation the Scripture gives it, when 'tis said, Ephes. 5. 26, 27. that Christ hath chosen it, and separated it for his spouse, to make her without spot and wrinkle, his body, and his fullness.*

|| Non vulgaris etiam laus, quod electa, segregataq;

dicatur à Christo, in sponsam, quæ esset sine rugâ & maculâ, corpus & plenitudo ejus. Calvin. Lib. 4. Institut. Cap. 1. Sect. 10. Edit. Genev. 1588.

M. Mestrezzat speaking of the visible Church in the same sense, says, * *The instruments made use of by God to build his Church, are the Pastors and Ministers of his Gospel, Ephes. 1. 23. according to that of St. Paul, Ephes. 4. He hath given some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the gathering together the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.*

* Les Organes, de quels Dieu se sert pour l'edifier & construire,

sont les Pasteurs & Ministres de son Evangile, selon que dit S. Paul, Ephes. 4. Il a donné les uns pour être Apôtres, les autres pour être Prophetes, les autres pour être Evangelistes, les autres pour être Pasteurs & Docteurs, pour l'assemblage des Saints, pour l'oeuvre du Ministère, pour l'edifier du corps de Christ. *Mestrezzat* de l'Eglise, Livre 1. Cap. 3. Pag. 31. Edit. Genev. 1649.

And a little after, † *The same Body of Christ which is invisible as to the Election of God, and inward sanctification of the heart, enjoys the visible Ministry of the Word, and from it brings forth fruit unto salvation. For we must not look for the Church of God, out of this visible state of the Ministry of the Word.* The same thing I say with relation to that other passage of St. Paul, where he says, Ephes. 5. 25, 26, 27. Jesus Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the Word; That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle. *They will not have it possible, (says M. de Condom, Conference, Page 5.) for this place to be understood of the visible Church, nor yet of the Church on Earth.* He must pardon me if I say he is mistaken; for tho we understand by this, the Church already in Heaven, yet do we besides understand the visible Church upon Earth, and *M. Mestrezzat* speaking of this passage, saies expressly, ∴ *That St. Paul there sets forth the Church as one and the same Body, receiving Grace, and Glory, and makes Glory to be the perfection and accomplishment of Grace.* It is evident then, that the visible Church is in our Opinion Jesus Christ's Body, or which comes all to one, that the Body of Christ, which is the true Church upon Earth, is visible.

† Ainsi un même corps de Christ, qui est invisible quant à l'élection de Dieu, & à la sanctification du cœur, jouit du Ministère visible de la parole, & en recoit le fruit du Salut. Car il ne faut pas chercher l'Eglise de

Dieu hors de l'état visible du Ministère de la parole. *Mestrezzat*. Ibid. Pag. 33. ∴ Ainsi Ephes. 5. il propose pour l'Eglise, un même corps recevant la grace, & la gloire, & represente la gloire, comme l'accomplissement de la grace. *Mestrezzat* Livre 1. Cap. 5. Pag. 50.

I should

I should now conclude my Third Enquiry, did I not think my self under an obligation to remove some difficulties, which may be started upon it. For it may be said, the Ministry is common to good and bad, and consequently it makes a Church composed of good men and bad. I answer, that the Ministry and the use of it is common both to good and bad, comes to pass only by accident, and from the treachery of the Enemy. Of right it belongs to true Believers only, and its genuine design was for them. Jesus Christ gave it for the *assembling of the Saints*, and instituted it to increase and cultivate his good Corn. If the Tares use it, or to speak more truly, abuse it, this is contrary to his intention. For his *hand never sowed these, but the enemy's, who rose by night for that purpose*. It is sure then that the Ministry of it self does not make up a Church composed of good and bad men, because such only as it was intended to gather, are to be reckoned of his visible Church. Now the Ministry is designed to gather the true Believers, and truly Righteous, not the worldlings and hypocrites in the least. If they thrust themselves into the Assemblies, it is not the Ministry that calls them, but the spirit of the world that sends them thither. An invincible argument that there is no other visible Church, but what consists of true Believers, because they are the only persons call'd to Religious Assemblies; and it is not Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ's enemy that thrusts others into them.

To give you yet further satisfaction as to this Point, permit me, *Sir*, to interpose between *M. de Condom* and *St. Augustin*; not to set them at difference, but endeavour to reconcile them. *M. de Condom* assures me, that Jesus Christ in that passage, *Tell it the Church*, spoke of a visible Church, a Church visible by the exercise of the Ministry; *St. Augustin* on the other side assures me, that he speaks of the Church consisting of true Believers only; I reconcile these two by inferring, That the Church of true Believers only is a Church made visible by the Exercise of the Ministry. *M. de Condom* tells me *St. Paul* speaks of a Church visible by the use of the Ministry, when he says, *Christ loved it, and cleansed it, with the washing of water by the word*. *St. Augustin* tells me, The Church of true Believers only is spoken of in this passage; I can reconcile these two no other way, than by concluding, that then the Church of true Believers only, is a Church visible by the use of the Ministry. *M. de Condom* teaches me, that in this passage, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church*, Jesus Christ denotes a Church visible, by the Exercise of an External Ministry; *St. Augustin* instructs me, that it denotes the Church of true Believers; How shall these two be made agree, but by concluding, that the Church of true Believers then is a visible Church, exercising an external Ministry? If you still desire an Argument of more strength, remember that the visibility

Confer. p.
7.
Matt. 18.

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ence, pag.
5, 6.
Ephes. 5.

Confer. p.
8, 9.

bility attributed to the Church in Scripture, cannot possibly be any other than that we assign it. For as on the one hand we are taught there, that the true Church consists of true Believers only; so do we learn there also, that true Believers are mixt with wicked men and hypocrites: It is there we find the similitudes, of Chaff amongst the good Corn, of bad Fishes jumbled together with the good, of Tares sown among the good Wheat. Now whatever we deliver concerning the Churches visibility and invisibility, is grounded entirely upon these two principles.

The second difficulty that may be started is, whether the visibility we assign to the Church, be sufficient to maintain Christian Fellowship, to comfort the Faithful, and bring them to Salvation. I answer, that this would not be sufficient indeed to establish the Church of *Rome's* pretensions, such as absolute authority over mens Consciences, Infallibility of Councils, a blind obedience to their Determinations, and this very insufficiency as to that shews us the injustice of such pretensions. But I say, that in its kind this visibility is sufficient, either for the maintenance of external Communion, or for the joy and consolation of the Faithful, and the bringing them to Salvation. In order to that, we need only know our selves to be in Communion with the truly Faithful. For tho we know that there is a mixture of ill men among these, yet shall we still continue in the external Communion with them, out of respect to God's Elect: We shall still bear the disorders and offences given by others patiently; we shall still receive the same Sacraments, and partake of other fruits of the Ministry with comfort, as knowing that the efficacy of these acts does not depend upon the wicked, but are blessings that belong to the righteous. And our not being able to make certain and personal distinctions of men, will add to our caution, that we suffer not our selves to be surprised into any superstitions and errors, that would insinuate themselves under the plausible title of the Church. And thus the visibility we allow the Church is abundantly sufficient.

It might further be demanded, whether it can so happen, that the Church may at any time lose the visibility of its Assemblies, and so become in this respect perfectly invisible? I answer, that although we acknowledge Almighty God can, whenever he pleases, utterly disperse the persons of the Faithful, and still keep them in this wretched condition by the methods of his own Providence; yet we do not think this ever did so happen. The Christian Church hath lain under great persecutions, but tho they were never so great, she hath constantly had some where or other some Assemblies, and some exercise of the Ministry, publick or private; and however her Martyrs and Confessors have all along made her visible, so that she cannot be said absolutely, ever to have disappeared quite from
the

the sight of men; Yet we must own, that in this respect there have been several degrees of her visibility, that is, the Church hath been more or less visible, as her Assemblies have been held, and her Ministry exercised with more or less freedom. We must own too, that not any particular Church upon Earth can promise it self a perpetual visibility, no nor so much as a perpetual subsistence. God removes his Candlestick from the midst of a people at his pleasure, and he does it then, when he hath no more Elect to call there. There have been many instances of this in the World, particularly in the Churches of *Africa*, once so beautiful and flourishing; but these are only the puttings out of some particular light, and do not at all prejudice either the subsistence, or visibility of the Christian Church in general.

The last difficulty to be urged is, whether the Church can at any time lose the visibility of its Characters, (I mean that visibility) whereby without descending to personal distinctions, we are enabled to conclude that there are true Believers in this mixed Society; so far as that we can not judge whether such be there or no? I answer, It not only may, but often hath happened, that the Characters by which we should in this respect come to know the true Church, have been so mightily obscured, that a man could not without much trouble and difficulty affirm, that *In this particular body it was, that God nourished and sustained his true Believers*; and we shall find hereafter that *M. de Condom* himself owns enough to establish the truth of this assertion. But still, tho this be uncontestable, as proved to be plain matter of fact, we do notwithstanding acknowledge, that the Church did never absolutely and entirely lose their visibility in this respect; because, as was said in answer to the Prejudices, we do not think that ever so total an Eclipse happen'd, that it could not in some measure be said, *This is the Society wherein God preserves some true Believers*.

Confer.
pag. 10.
Pag. 12.

And here I cannot but complain of what *M. de Condom* does afterwards in his Discourse accuse us of, saying, that the visible Church sometimes ceases to be. *They are constrained (says he) to say, that the visible Church sometimes ceases to be upon Earth.* And in another place, *This is the Church, which your Ministers know not: They teach you that this visible and exterior Church may cease to be upon Earth.* But this is urging his charge against us too far: So far are we from believing, the visible Church ceases to be, that we do not so much as say, it ever absolutely ceases to be visible: And yet there would be a mighty difference, between saying she ceases to be visible, and that she ceases to be at all. The Sun, the most visible thing in the World, is often not visible to our eyes, but yet he ceases not to be. In the point of Real presence, *M. de Condom* will own, that the Body of
Jesus

Jesus Christ ceases to be visible; but he would not be well-pleased for that reason to be taxed with saying, he ceases to be there at all. But however, let *M. de Condom* put what sense he please upon our words, it is certain we acknowledg the Church to be perpetually visible, in the meaning I explain'd just now: And *M. de Condom* could never have spent his time to less purpose, than in taking such pains to confute an opinion which we never held against him.

Quest. 4. *What Church the Promises of Jesus Christ belong to, whether that defined by M. de Condom, a Society making profession to believe, &c. or that which we define, A Society which making profession to govern it self by Christ's Word, does really govern it self by it?*

M. de Condom speaking of us in one place of his Discourse, says, *They have not the Consolation which the Catholics have, to see Jesus Christ's promise visibly accomplish'd, and maintain'd, during so many Ages. They cannot shew a Church which has ever been since Jesus Christ came to build it on the Rock; and to save his word, they are obliged to have recourse to a Church of the Predestinate, which neither themselves, nor any else can shew.* After having cleared the perpetual visibility of the Church, as you lately saw, judg you, Sir, what ground there is for his saying, we have not the consolation of seeing Jesus Christ's Promise visibly accomplish'd and maintain'd during so many Ages; and whether we have not more than it is possible to have, according to the Church of *Rome's* principle. *M. de Condom* according to his Principle, sees the duration of a Church, whose whole essence consists in an outward profession. What is there in this more than human? We see the duration of a Church, whose essence consists in true Faith and Regeneration, What is there in this that is not all Divine? *M. de Condom* sees the duration of a Church supported by politick methods, by paying a blind obedience to the injunctions of great men, and those perhaps Hypocrites too, What is there in this more than human? We see the duration of a Church preserved in spite of confusion, and all the froward malice of men: What is there in this less than Divine? *They cannot* (says he) *shew a Church which hath ever been since Jesus Christ came to build it on the Rock.* Yes, we shew this Church built on the Rock; for when we shew the Body in which God nourishes and breeds up his true Believers, we shew at the same time those true Believers, which are his Church built on the Rock, tho' mixt with such as build on the Sand. When we shew the field where Jesus Christ sowed his good Seed, we shew the Wheat, tho' there be Tares among it. But let *M. de Condom* tell us, if he think fit, how he can shew us a Church built on the Rock, making, as he does, the essence of the

Confer.
p. 8.

Church to consist entirely in an outward profession. If he call this a Church upon the Rock, Jesus Christ himself will reply for that such only are built upon a Rock, *who bear this word, and do it*; whereas all besides are built upon the Sand. *To save Christ's Word* (continues he) *they are obliged to have recourse to a Church of the Predestinate*. Does M. de Condom blame us for seeking the accomplishment of Jesus Christ's Promises, in the body of his Elect, and true Believers? Pray where should we look for it else? In a croud of Hypocrites and Reprobates, that have no Faith, no Holiness, no Piety, but in outward appearance only? Such as God never call'd, and Jesus Christ shall one day tell, he never knew them? Is not this of Cardinal Bellarmine's, Perron's, and M. de Condom's, a curious Church, to the constituting whereof no inward virtue is necessarily required, but merely an outward profession of Faith, and communicating in the Sacraments? A Church, whose Unity, the formal essence of it, is *that of an external Vocation, not that of Predestination, nor internal Faith, nor a Union of Souls by the works of Love*: In a word, a Church defined, not by believing, and governing it self by God's word, but by *making profession to believe and govern it self by God's Word*? Is not this putting a mighty value upon Jesus Christ's Promises, to apply them not only to profane and worldly men, as well as the Saints and regenerate; but to such a Church as would remain entire, tho there were no true believers, nor righteous men in it; and not cease to be the true Church of Christ, tho it were composed of Hypocrites, and none else?

Confer. p.

3, 6.

Ephes. 5.

25, 26, 27.

29, 30.

Thus far, Sir, there is no great perspicacity required, to discern, that the question in hand resolves it self, there being little probability that Jesus Christ was so lavish of his Promises. But however let us examine the matter a little more closely. The first passage M. de Condom presents us with, is that of St. Paul, *Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might cleanse it with the washing of Water by the Word, that he might make it a glorious Church, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish*. And a little after, *No man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church; For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*. We see in these words, the obligation Jesus Christ put himself under, to sanctify his Church, to make it a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish, to nourish and cherish it, as his own flesh and bones. Our business is to know, whether this obligation can upon any pretence whatever respect Hypocrites and wicked men; And who will be perswaded it does? *This Church, M. de Condom says, is glorious, because she glorifies God, because she declares to all the Earth the Glory of Jesus Christ's Gospel and Cross*. Now as to the wicked, of whom we are here treating, there

Confer. p.

6.

there need but this one word be added, That they glorify God and the Gospel in hypocrisy and dissimulation, but in their hearts deny it. Then see what God himself hath spoken as to this matter. *Unto the ungodly said God, why dost thou preach my laws, and takest my Covenant in thy mouth? This Church (M. de Condom tells us) is holy, because she always, constantly, and without varying teaches the Holy Doctrine.* Add here, But as for the wicked, if they teach the holy Doctrine, this is but with their lips, and in shew only; then see what St. Paul says, *They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, from such turn away.* This Church (according to M. de Condom) hath neither spot nor wrinkle, because she hath neither any evil Error, nor any evil Maxim, and because she instructs, and contains in her bosom the Elect of God. Add, But as for sinners, They follow Truth and Right only in pretence. Then see what Jesus Christ says of such, *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, have not we prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out Devils; and in thy name have done many wonderful works? Then will I say unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* And can any man after all this allow them a propriety in the Promises of Christ?

Psal. 50.

16.

Conf. p. 6.

2 Tim. 3.

5.

Matt. 7. 22.

The second passage M. de Condom makes use of, is that of Jesus Christ, which I will here set down at length. *Tell the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a Publican; verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, of my father which is in heaven; For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Jesus Christ, M. de Condom says, used the word Church to signify this visible Society. I agree with him, that the Church there signifies a visible Church; I say further, that it signifies a Church represented by the Pastors, by whom it binds and looses, by whom it asks the Father; I am still of opinion, that those excellent Promises of Jesus Christ, that God will ratify what they have bound and loosed, that he will grant what they ask, and that the Lord himself will be in the midst of them, are all made to the Church taken in this sense. But then I say withal, that this visible Church is that of the true Believers only, and that Hypocrites have no share at all in it. It is to the true Believers alone, that this Ministry belongs, they are the persons represented by the Pastors, they the only people that ask and obtain, that are gathered together in Christ's name, and in the midst of whom he is. And yet it often happens, that the Ministers of this Church, tho they be in this function, and do the business of it,

Matt. 18.

17, 18, 19.

20.

Conf. p. 7.

* Ali-
quando
commix-
tio ipsa
tempora-
lis facit, ut
quidam
pertinentes
ad civita-
tem Baby-
loniam,
admini-
strent res
pertinen-
tes ad Je-
rusalem--
Omnes de

are not yet true Members of it themselves. * It often falls out, says St. *Augustin*, by reason of this mixture here upon Earth, that people really belonging to Babylon, administer the things belonging to Jerusalem. All they, of whom it is said, whatsoever they bid you observe, observe and do, Matt. 23. 3. but do not ye after their works, are Citizens of Babylon, that rule the Commonwealth of Jerusalem. For if they had no charge belonging to Jerusalem, why should it be said, They sit in Moses seat, therefore what they bid you observe, that observe and do? Again, if they were true Citizens of Jerusalem, who should reign with Christ for ever, What occasion was there for adding, But do not ye after their works? It is not then to the Ministers that the Promises belong, but to the Body they represent, and whose Offices they discharge. Now this body is the New Jerusalem, which shall reign with Christ for ever; That is, the true Believers.

quibus dictum est, Quæ dicunt facite, quæ autem faciunt, nolite facere, cives sunt *Babyloniæ* administrantes. Remp. civitatis *Jerusalem*. Si enim nihil administrarent civitatis *Jerusalem*, unde est, Quæ dicunt facite? Unde, In Cathedrâ *Moyfi* sedent? Rursus si cives sunt ipsius *Jerusalem*, qui regnabunt in æternum cum Christo, unde Quæ faciunt, facere nolite? *Aug.* in *Psal.* 61.

Confer.
p. 8, 9.

M. de Condom's third passage is this, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* Jesus Christ (says he) would shew something illustrious and clear, when he said, that his Church, maugre the opposition of Hell, should be always invincible: he would, I say, shew something clear and resplendent, which might serve in all Ages, for a sensible and palpable assurance of the immutable certainty of his Promises. He adds, The Church of which Christ speaks, is then a confessing Church, a Church that publishes the Faith, and consequently an exterior and visible Church. He says further, That it is a Church, to which an exterior Ministry is given; for 'tis added, I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven. I answer, The Church spoken of in this passage is really a Confessing Church, a Church that publishes the Faith, a Church to whom Christ hath given an exterior Ministry; a Church that uses the Ministry of the Keys, that binds and looses, and by Consequence an exterior and visible Church. The Question is, whether wicked men, let them dissemble never so well, and carry never so fair an outside, do truly belong to this Church, or whether it consist of sincere Believers only. 'Tis a Church exterior and visible, I acknowledg it, but it is also a Church interior, and real; otherwise it would differ nothing from a Phantome, a cheating apparition. 'Tis a Confessing Church, and publishes the Faith, but it is likewise a Church believing in what it confesses and publishes.

lishes. 'Tis a Church, to which not only St. Peter's Confession must be attributed, but also the principle and ground of that Confession. *Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven:* And therefore whose Confession proceeds not from Flesh and Blood, but from Grace and Divine Illumination. 'Tis a Church *built upon a Rock*, and not upon the Sand, therefore not a Church that Hypocrites are of. 'Tis a Church *built by Jesus Christ*; a Church therefore of true Believers only, because such only are built by Christ. 'Tis a Church to which this Promise of the Gates of Hell never prevailing against it, belongs; And can we with any pretence to modesty say, that the Gates of Hell do not prevail against the wicked ingulfed in vice? Can we say those admirable words carry no stronger importance, than the preservation of a mere exterior profession? But *this is a Church which hath, and exerciseth such a Ministry*. Who questions it? But does this Ministry belong to the wicked and hypocrites? No. It belongs only to true Believers, the rest have no part in it; only as they sometimes exercise the external Offices, without any true right to them; or receive them unworthily, under the covering of hypocrisy, and being intermixt with good Christians. But *M. de Condom* says further, *Jesus Christ promised something illustrious and clear, which might serve in all Ages for a sensible and palpable assurance of the immutable certainty of his Promises*. These words want a little unfolding; If they understand hereby a temporal prosperity, a perpetual visibility promised to the Church, in pomp and lustre, I deny that Christ promised any such thing. If they understand an Earthly Dominion, a worldly Greatness under the title of Hierarchy, I deny still that Christ ever promised any such thing. If they understand a constant unblemish purity in the Ministry, in the Matters of Doctrine and Worship, of moral Rules, and orderly Government, This again I deny that Christ ever promised. If they understand Believers perseverance in Faith and Holiness, so far forth as is necessary to Salvation, in despite of all temptations to the contrary, from Hell, the World, and their own Infirmities, This I own our Lord hath promised. Now this in my opinion is a thing sufficiently illustrious and clear, to serve for a sensible and palpable assurance, of the immutable certainty of his Promises. For when we see our Brethren dye, and do our selves dye in the bosom of Truth and Piety, this denotes Jesus Christ's Grace sensibly enough. If they understand over and above this, a perpetual subsistence of the Ministry, in such a condition as is sufficient for the Salvation of God's Elect, maugre all the oppositions of Hell, or the disorders of the Ministers themselves, this I do likewise acknowledge to be promised by Jesus Christ, and herein we have a sensible and palpable assurance of the immutable certainty of his Promises. For

Matt. 16.

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in the midst of so many infirmities as the Faithful are liable to, in the midst of so many Thorns as encompass and incumber the Lilies of the Son of God; in the midst of so many superstitious, profane, heretical, designing, worldly-minded, lukewarm and indifferent people, that are exteriour Professors, and often Officers in the Church; that God should still preserve the Ministry, so far as is necessary for nourishing and cherishing his Elect, and true Believers, and to bring them safe to Heaven; is a sensible indication of the strength of our Saviours Words, *That the Gates of Hell should not prevail against it.* He does not say, the Gates of Hell shall never fight against it, nor that they shall never get any advantages over it; He supposes that they shall encounter it, that they shall very much endanger it, that they shall sometimes reduce it to great extremities; But he assures us, *they shall not prevail.* In this the Assistance and perpetual Providence of Christ is the more gloriously illustrated, that the Church can say of her self, *Many a time have they vexed me from my youth up, but they have not prevailed against me.*

Pf. 129. 2.
Matt. 28.

Confer.
p. 9.

M. de Condom alledges next, those words of our Saviour, *Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; And lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* Upon which Text M. de Condom puts this Comment. *Teaching with you, Baptizing with you, Instructing with you my Faithful, to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded, consequently exercising with you in my Church and exteriour Ministry. 'Tis with you, 'tis with those who shall succeed you, 'tis with the Society assembled under their Conduct, that I shall be from this present, even to the consummation of the World, always, without interruption; For there shall not be any one moment in which I will leave you, but tho absent in Body, I will be always present by my holy Spirit.* I own that Christ speaks there to his Church, that he orders it to Baptize, to Teach, and consequently gives it a Ministry, which he commands to be exercised therein. I acknowledg moreover, that he promises to be with it, to Teach with it till the consummation of the World, without interruption; but this is not the point in controversy. All our business is to know, what Church this is; M. de Condom will have it all that Society that makes profession to believe, &c. we think it to be that, which making profession to believe, does so really and sincerely. He supposes his Proposition without offering Arguments for it; but we prove ours. For no man can say, that Christ is with wicked men and hypocrites, by the presence of his Holy Spirit, always, without interruption; that there is never any moment when he leaves them, even to the Consummation of the World. This can be affirmed of none but the Society of true Believers: Such a Society there will always be, and Jesus Christ always in the midst of

of them, baptizing, and instructing with them; For tho the mouth and hand of his enemies may often exercise the outward acts of the Ministry, and often with abundance of impurity and disorder; yet Jesus Christ does for ever preserve his faithful under the Ministry which is rightfully theirs, he does ever baptize, and teach them even by wicked Ministers, so as by his wonderful Providence, never to suffer so fatal a corruption in the Ministry, as should render it insufficient to cherish the Faith of his Elect, even to the conclusion of the World.

To the same purpose it is manifest St. Paul speaks of the design and duration of the Evangelical Ministry. *Jesus Christ hath given some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastours and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledg of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That is, says M. de Condom, the Ecclesiastical Ministry shall last without any discontinuance till the general Resurrection.*

Ephes. 4.

Confer.
p. 9, 10.

I say once again; this is not the Point in Controversy. The Ministry shall last to the end of the World, and in such a degree and condition too, as may suffice for the edifying of the Body of Christ, for the conducting all his Elect, and true Believers to that perfection St. Paul speaks of. Our concern is to know two things, The first, whether This shall be constantly preserved from corruption and impurity, and continue in the state wherein Christ and his Apostles left it us; or whether the Tares sown by the Enemy in the Lord's Field by night, shall not vitiate it? The second, whether its uninterrupted continuance must wholly consist in being ordinarily transmitted from one Minister to another, in the way we call exterior or personal succession; or whether it may not happen, that the Church should sometime take away her Ministry from them, who have palpably abused it; and commit it to others, who she may hope will use it better? Each of these two are the matters in dispute, and not that which M. de Condom was pleased to determine from that place of St. Paul.

Give me leave, Sir, to run over these wonderful Promises of Jesus Christ to his Church, and some others of the same nature once more.

The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. He will present her without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish. He will love and cherish her as his own flesh and bones. He will bring her in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledg of the Son of God, to the measure of a perfect man. He will be in the midst of her at solemn Assemblies. He will continue with her to the end of the World. He will give his spirit to abide with her for ever. He will redeem her from all iniquity, and purify her, that she may be a peculiar people zealous of good works. He will

Matt. 16.

Ephes. 5.

Ephes. 4.

Matt. 18.

Matt. 28.

Joh. 14.

Tit. 2.

Ephes. 2.

build

Jer. 31.

Ezek. 36.

build her upon himself, to be an holy Temple, an habitation of God through the spirit. He will write his laws in their hearts, and engrave them in their minds. He will take away the heart of stone, and give them an heart of flesh, a new heart, and a new spirit.

How is it possible, that nothing of all this should surprize the Doctors of the *Romish* Communion, nor stagger their confidence, of finding these Promises fulfilled, as well in the bad as the good, the just as well as unjust? For in short, if wicked men, who have no more than external profession, become by virtue of that profession, really and truly Members of the Church; the Promises concern them, and they have a right to them in common with others; for certainly they concern as many as make up the Body of Christ. Now shall we say, that notwithstanding these are drowned in vice, *Yet the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against them*, provided they can but counterfeit dexterously? Shall we say, that tho gangrened and putrified from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, it matters not; *They shall be without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish*, so they do but continue in an external profession? Shall we say, that tho they have no Faith, no Justice, no Piety, they need not trouble themselves, Jesus Christ *will be with them alway* by the presence of his Holy Spirit, provided they can but maintain a fair outside? Shall we say, that although they prostitute themselves to all wickedness and villany, they need not be so much concerned, Jesus Christ will not fail *to redeem them from all iniquity*, and to make of them *a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, provided they be not wanting in dissimulation? Here is no invidious aggravation in all this. The Promises of Christ are plain matters of fact, delivered expressly in Scripture in favour of the Church. The defining of the Church by a bare external profession, is another plain matter of fact, to be seen through all the Writers of that Communion, and particularly this discourse of *M. de Condom*. The applying these Promises to the Church thus defined, is what *M. de Condom* justly contends for, and makes it an inducement to peoples conversion. So that I do not in the least exaggerate, nor do I see what reply they can make. To talk of two true Churches even in Christ's sight, one to which the Promises belong as such, *viz.* That of True Believers; and another to which they do not belong as such, *viz.* That, whose essence consists in the external profession; besides that it would be advancing a notion contrary to Scripture and Reason, which inform us but of one true Church; would be to argue to no purpose; for wherefore should we argue about a Church to which the Promises of Jesus Christ have no relation? Why should we invest with such glorious and divine privileges, a Church to which Christ hath promised nothing at all? Or what reason have we with a blind obedience to sub-

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mit to a Church, where it may happen, that wicked men, and Enemies of God, may get the upper hand, and the Spirit of Christ bear no Rule in it?

To say we ought to distinguish between two kinds of Promises, one such as respect inward Sanctification, and Salvation, the other respecting the perpetual Visibility of the Ministry, and its Infallibility in the external profession of the Truth; and that the first sort are peculiar to the Elect and true Believers in the Church, but the other belong to the whole Body of that Society making Profession; besides that this would be to start a Division of the Promises, which the Scripture divided not, for all made there, are made to one and the same Body, to one and the same Church, without distinction: besides, that this would be to frame Promises that never were given, such as a perpetual Infallibility of the Ministry in the external Profession of the Truth, as we lately saw: Besides this, I say, it is plainly to suppose that the Church, as a Church, hath no promises made her of Sanctification, and Salvation, and so consequently, 'tis to oppose Scripture, which makes them to her formally under the name and title of a Church. *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against my Church,* says Christ. *Christ loved the Church,* says St. Paul, *and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, and present it to himself a glorious Church, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.* The Lord (says the Apostle) *nourishes and cherishes the Church*; all these Promises imply Sanctification and Salvation. What can we then with reason say to this matter? except what was said upon the foregoing Question, to wit, That we sometimes form an Idea of the Church, by a Judgment of *Charity*, so looking upon all external Professors in general to be true Believers, and by this Judgment we include in our Notion abundance of People who really and indeed are not of the Church, and consequently have no title to the Promises of Jesus Christ. But this Notion is rectified by a Judgment of *Reflection*, Exactness, and Truths formed from the Idea's which Scripture and right Reason give us of the true Church, restraining it to true Believers only; and that the Promises of Scripture must be applied to it in this last, true, exact Notion only. Add to this, that this true Church being intermixt with the counterfeit, is not indeed so distinctly visible, that we can say with certainty, this or that particular man is a true Believer; for this is proper to God alone; but that it is however visible, in a sure, though indistinct manner, which will go so far as to affirm, That there are true Believers in such an external Profession: Add further, that this Church thus visible, becomes more or less so, according as Corruptions and Disorders are more or less predominant in their exterior Society;

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Matt. 16.
Ephes. 5.

and that sometimes it is mightily eclipsed, partly through the prevalence of worldly, superstitious, and such like Persons; partly through the infirmities of most true Believers; but still that it never was absolutely invisible: Add once more, that this Church now upon Earth, together with that in Heaven, and that which shall spring up in succeeding Ages, are all three that *Universal Church*, we profess to believe in our Creed: Add, I say, these three last Propositions to the two foregoing, and so you will comprise all I have advanced hitherto; you will be furnished with certain uncontested Principles grounded upon Scripture, upon Reason, upon the Fathers, and upon experience; by the help of which you will be able with great ease to throw off all those difficulties usually started by the Romanists upon this Subject. This will be further evidenced by what I am in the next place about to say.

Natural and necessary Consequences of the foregoing Principles.

THE first Consequence, Sir, to be drawn from what I said, is, that *M. de Condom* hath been very unjust, in upbraiding us, as if we dealt with that Article of our Creed concerning the *Universal Church*, as the *Arrians* and *Macedonians* do with those that relate to Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost; which is to confess them with the mouth, but in effect to reject them, by not believing them as we ought. Those Hereticks evacuate the Articles concerning Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, because they allow them a Divinity, which is but a seeming, and imaginary one only; and thus they rob Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost of their Real Essence. Can any man say we do thus by the Church? we make it essentially to consist in true and solid Faith, and Regeneration. Is not this to make it real? what may be said of such as make it essentially to consist in a bare outward Profession? Is not this to make it no better than a Phantome, a Shadow? Is not this to confess with the mouth, but in effect to reject it? Does not this make all those great and noble Ideas given of it in Scripture dwindle into nothing? Judge you, Sir, if you please, to which of these two Parties *M. de Condom's* reproach is most applicable.

II. By all I have said concerning the Visibility or Invisibility of the Church, you may know what an unjust accusation they load us with daily,
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of making the Church utterly invisible, upon pretence that we place it in true Believers only ; for if this accusation were true, it would fall not upon us, but upon Scripture, upon the Fathers, and particularly upon St. *Augustine*, whose Principles we follow intirely. But as St. *Paul* never thought of making a Church perfectly invisible, though he said, *The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his ; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity ;* so neither do we pretend to spoil her of her Visibilty, when we say the same thing he did. As St. *Augustin* hath not made her invisible, though he said all that was related out of him ; the same thing must be said for us. But what can we think of this method of disputing, which supposing the charge upon tryal, to be a granted confest thing, falls strongly upon proving the Church's Visibilty ; and so Profelytes men upon this false supposition, and those useles Arguments ? Do not you look upon this, as a very fair way of proceeding ?

2 Tim. 2.
19.

III. Hence likewise you may perceive, how unjustly they put that question to us, Where our Church was before the Reformation ? For if the Church consist of true Believers alone, as we have shown, ours was then just where it is now, *i. e.* in the common Field, where Jesus Christ hath sown his Wheat, and the Enemy by Night his Tares. There is only a twofold difference observable. One, that before the Reformation, that part of the Field where the Corn was sown, was wider, whereas now it is contracted into less room, because in many places the Tares have driven away the Wheat, and remain alone ; another, that then in the places where Wheat and Tares grew together, the Wheat was thinner, and got less nourishment, and the Tares quite contrary ; whereas now the Wheat is thicker, and better cultivated.

The Field is the World (as Christ says) the good Corn are true Believers, the Tares are the Children of this World. Before the Reformation, the true Believers were mixt with the rest in the same exterior Profession, as they are still ; but they were, if I may so say, stifled as it were with the great number of the other sort, and the spiritual life they led had much of uneasiness, by reason of the Corruptions in the Ministry, which stinted them in their necessary Food, and besides mixt many such things with it, as were not only incapable of sustaining life, but even prejudicial to it : Whereas, since the Reformation these same Believers being separated from the rest, are by this means much disburdened of that which oppress them ; they are more at liberty, the Ministry allows them the Food of heavenly life in a much larger proportion, and gives it them more pure, and free from strange mixtures ; and though they still con-

tinue among worldly men, yet now they do not find near so much prejudice from them.

IV. Another Instance of this nature is commonly given us, and how injurious it is, you may discern by the Principles laid down before. They bid us shew them these true Believers before the Reformation, single them out, say they, tell us their names, were they visible or invisible? If even at this time, when things are not near so confused, none but God only can know distinctly and infallibly, what particular men are the true Believers; If their visibility consist only in ones being able to say with certainty, there are true Believers, and not in saying such or such are the men; is it not a very unjust demand to examine us of past Ages, when things were so strangely in the dark? Would not any man of equity think it enough, that we can shew how far soever the Ministry was corrupted, that still the true Believers might subsist under it? and is not this very thing a visible indication of the Churches perpetual Visibility, that God hath not forsaken us?

V. Another necessary Consequence of the Principles now established, is, that in an exteriour Society carrying the name of a Church, it may so happen according to the Notion we frame of it, from a Judgment of Charity, that the Ministry, Ecclesiastical Dignities, and Chairs, as they are termed, may come to be filled by Hypocrites, Superstitious, Worldly, and interested Persons, and that there shall be a great many more such as these in Office, than good men. For seeing God only can have a distinct and personal knowledge of true Believers, and since he does not bestow these Offices immediately, and by his own hand; it may without question come to pass, that both those that confer, and those that take upon them these Offices, may be the Tares sown in the Lord's Field. A man cannot have any absolute certainty, that this shall not be so; because there is not any promise to the contrary; and because on the other hand, there are instances that it hath been so already. To pretend this cannot be, because it would hinder the Churches subsisting for ever, is no Argument at all; for if the Church consist properly of true Believers, as hath been undeniably proved, the perpetual subsistence of true Believers does not depend on the faithfulness of the Ministers, nor the untainted purity of the Ministry; except we suppose the Principle of a blind Obedience to the Ministers, which is a false Principle, and destructive of Religion, as hath been made appear in the defence of the Reformation. Indeed this ground being laid, when once the Ministry is corrupted, it must needs follow, that the faithful are corrupted too, because bound to receive implicitly

implicitly whatever is delivered to them by their Ministry. But reject this principle, and there is no reason why the Faithful may not separate the good from the bad, and why they may not subsist under such a Ministry, by the help of that distinction which the Grace of God enables them to make. And here, *Sir*, allow me to wonder a little at the pleasant double which the Doctors of the *Romish* Communion make when they dispute. Our first and main question is, whether we ought to acquiesce in the Council of *Trent's* Determinations? Yes, say they, you must yield an implicit obedience to the Decrees of the Prelates assembled in a Body. But why an Implicit Obedience? Because (say they) the Church cannot subsist without it. But why cannot it subsist without it? Cannot it subsist by resuming the Ministry out of such hands, and putting it into better? Cannot it, without going so far, subsist by separating between good and bad food? No; they tell you, it cannot, because it is obliged to receive implicitly whatever the Prelates in a Body shall deliver. What way of disputing call you this, if it be not quite to swerve from good sense and reason, and to be lost in an impertinent maze? For is not this a perfect round, first to prove an Implicit Obedience, because the Church cannot otherwise subsist; and then to prove the Church cannot otherwise subsist without this Obedience, because men ought to obey implicitly?

VI. But let us proceed in drawing our Consequences. And being we hit upon the point of the Implicit Obedience they exact to the decisions of Bishops, and that Sovereign and Absolute Authority wherewith they would invest them, let us try, if this can agree with the Principles we have establish'd. I meddle not now with those other reasons that might be made use of; you will find them in part in the Book I quoted just now. All I shall say is, that since no man can have a distinct knowledge of the True Believers, and that the True Church consists of such alone; no man consequently can be secure, that this Body of Prelates, whether considered single, or whether as convened in a Council, are the true Church. Yes, but says one, they represent the true Church. I agree with you; so far as the True Believers are still under their Ministry: But representing the True Church does not presently endue them with its Opinions and Affections. The true Church in conferring her Ministry upon men, does not confer upon them withal, either true Faith, or true Regeneration, much less perfect Infallibility. Hence, whatever determinations they give, are still subject to an examination. If these prove conformable to God's Word, it is our duty, not only to embrace them, but further to respect the Body of Ministers as the true Church Representative; because they have express her sense; and Charity will carry us still further, and incline

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us to esteem them true Believers, because they have acted as such. But when their divisions are found to disagree with God's Word, we are to look upon them as men that have abused their ministry. If this happen in things not plainly interesting the Conscience, their ministry must be born with, and the liberty of separating the clean from the unclean, natural to every Believer, made use of: If they do interest the Conscience, we groan under their ministry, we pray to God, we implore succors from above, still using the Liberty of Conscience to refuse the Evil, and retain the Good. But if this Body of Prelates proceed to violent taking away this necessary and indispensable Liberty of Conscience, and reduce the faithful to this hard streight, either to be damned for false Doctrine, in slavishly following their Ministers errors, or damn'd for dissimulation in pretending to follow them; Then the true Believers ought to look upon them as men that have stript themselves of the right of the Ministry, to oppose them, to take it from them, and repose the trust in other hands. It is evident then, the supreme Authority we contend about, cannot take place, because it is continually in danger of being invested in worldly men, to whom it cannot in any case belong. And so we should be continually in danger of mistaking That for the Church Representative, which neither is really, nor can possibly be so.

VII. The seventh Use to be made of what we have advanced, is the right apprehending of some expressions used by us, *viz. That the Church is corrupted*, that the *state of the Church hath been interrupted*, and the like, so as to reconcile these with Jesus Christ's Promises: which import not only the perpetual existence, but also the perpetual holiness and incorruption of the Church. Now for that corruption attributed by us to the Church, I say, that whereas the Promises of Christ concern the true Church, that is, True Believers only; our expression on the contrary respects the Church, according to that *Idea of Charity* we form of it, including all external Professors, which are ordinarily call'd the Visible Church. 'Tis of the Church taken in this last notion, that we say, she is corrupted; for the whole Body being made up, as we have seen, of good and bad men, it hath come to pass, that the wicked are mightily increased, and the spirit of the World, which is a spirit of error and superstition, shewed it self in an eminent manner. But we do not understand true Believers to be corrupted, only so far forth as they may possibly have contracted some tincture of infirmity, by conversing with the others. And for that interruption of the state of the Church, mentioned in our Confession of Faith,

Faith, where we say, * *That the state of the Church being interrupted, it was necessary it should be raised up again out of its ruines and desolation*: The meaning of those expressions is, not what *M. de Condom* pretends, that the true Church ceases to exist, or that its Ministry was quite extinct in those times which we call times of desolation and ruine, for we make a distinction between the *Church*, and the *state of the Church*. The Church is the true Believers making profession of Truth, and Christian Piety, and a real Holiness, under a Ministry, which dispenses all nourishment necessary for spiritual life, without keeping back any; Its natural and proper state is to be freed, as much as its militant condition can admit, from the impure mixture of prophane worldly men; not to be covered over, and as it were swallowed up with this Chaff and Tares; to have a pure Ministry, not incumbered with errors, with false worship, superstitious customs; a Ministry in the hands of good men, who are in possession of it by honest methods, and set a good example to others. This State is what we think hath been interrupted, having seen strange opinions brought into Religion, Superstitions propagated, the Ministry invaded by men neither deserving, nor capable of it, and that were advanced by scandalous and unlawful methods; having seen vices openly predominant among Churchmen, the Pulpits more zealous for Tales and Legends, than the Word of God; The Schools busying themselves with ridiculous Questions and Curiosities, the Sacraments burdened with strange Ceremonies, the instruction and edification of mens Souls wretchedly neglected; and in a word, the Gospel liberty changed into a temporal slavery. This is what we mean by the state of the Church being interrupted; this the ruine and desolation we bewail. The Church hath not ceased to exist, nor did she perfectly lose her visibility, or her Ministry, God forbid: But both she and her Ministry have seen the natural state they ought to continue in, changed and interrupted.

VIII. Apply these principles now to our Reformation, and then, *Sir*, you will discern, that granting this supposition to be true, that the Body of the Prelates invested in the ministry of the Church in our Fathers days, and assembled in the *Trent Council*, supposing, I say, that they delivered such determinations in points of Faith, as are incompatible with Salvation; Granting it to be true, that they took away Christian Liberty by Anathematizing all who should refuse to believe, and submit to those determinations as they did; and by adding to all this violence and compulsion, our Fathers had reason to look upon them as Ministers that had justly deprived themselves of all right to exercise their Ministry over them by such ill conduct, and to give that power of the Ministry to others. They had

* Acts 31.
In the 31.
Article of
the Galli-
can confes-
sion, speak-
ing of an
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nary voca-
tion to the
Ministry
in times of
necessity,
these
words are
inserted.
Quoniam
interdum,
ut nostris
etiam
tempori-
bus, inter-
rupto Ec-
clesiæ sta-
tu, necesse
fuit, non-
nullos esse
qui Eccle-
siæ collap-
sæ ruinas
instaura-
rent.

had reason to look upon the party that adhered to these Prelates with such obstinate stiffness as a Body or Society of which a man could not positively say, *That is the particular Body wherein God nourishes and cherishes his Faithful and Elect.*

IX. Hence likewise it follows, that our Fathers are wrongfully charged with making a Schism, and separating from the Church. For it being sure, that the Church consists of the Faithful only; and besides, that we are of opinion, the *Trent* Bishops themselves broke the band of external Communion with sound Believers, and brought things to such a pass, that our Ancestors could not possibly joyn with them in the same Assemblies; it is evident, They were the Beginners of the Schism, the Authors and makers of this lamentable division.

X. It signifies nothing to alledg, that they were possessors of the Ministry by an exterior and ordinary succession; for the Ministry is not such a thing, as men when once possessors of, can never forfeit their right to, tho they abuse it never so much. They enjoyed it by an external succession, 'tis confessed; but this succession with respect to mens persons continues no longer than we can say, *The faithful* are under their Ministry. When we cannot be sure of that any more, from thenceforth the Prelates have lost their right; and such a succession afterwards, would be but as the succession of death to a disease, or of night to twilight. I do not say the Ministry it self is extinct, God forbid; but I say in such a case it devolves of right to that other part of the Society where the Faithful are. The reason of which Truth is this: That the Ministers are naturally the Church Representative; And all their Authority is derived from the Body of the Faithful; When therefore it happens that they break the band of external communion which joyns them to those Faithful, it is plain they represent them no longer; and the holding their Authority over them afterwards, is a force and usurpation.

XI. Lastly, From the Principles we have established, it appears, how vain and ungrounded a scandal it is, which the Controversits of the *Romish* Communion are continually upbraiding us with, of setting up a new Church. For being the Church, according to Scripture, sound sense, and the opinions of the Fathers, is nothing else but the Society of true Believers: To have set up a new Church, we must have brought in a new Faith, different from what Jesus Christ delivered to the World. If they can convict us of being guilty in this point, we are heartily content they should not only say we have formed a new Church, but that we have formed

formed a false, perverse, naughty Society, and draw all the consequences against us, that can be naturally drawn from that Concession. But if we on the contrary have only rejected new Doctrines, a worship that Christian Religion never was acquainted with; and Errors brought into the Church since it was first established; if we have only refined the Ministry, and restored the Gospel to its natural lustre, they ought to be just in acknowledgment, that God hath made use of us, for the preservation of his true, Ancient, Primitive Church, and the rescuing it from oppression. If it be true, that the *Trent* Council have made Articles of Faith of such Doctrines and Practices as were never revealed to us by Christ, may we not say that That hath set up a new Religion, and consequently a new Church? Let us judge of one another by this Rule of right reason, and conscientiously examine the truth of what hath been done on both sides; for upon such an examination the justice or injustice of taxing us with Novelty, will depend.

I

THE

THE
SECOND PART
OF
Monsieur de CONDOM's Discourse
EXAMINED.

THUS much I thought fit to say in Answer to the First part of *M. de Condom's* Discourse; The Second will not detain us very long. *They made me (says he) some Objections concerning the frequent revolts of the people of Israel, who had so often forsaken God, the Kings, and all the people, as the Holy Scripture speaks; during which, the publick worship was so extinct, that Elijah thought himself the only servant of God, till he learnt from God himself, that he had reserved to himself seven thousand men which had not bowed the knee unto Baal. To this I answer'd (proceeds he) that for what regarded Elijah, there was no difficulty, since 'twas apparent from the very words, that it concern'd only Israel, where Elijah prophesied; and that the Divine Worship was so far from being at that time extinct in Judah, that 'twas there under the reign of Josaphat in the greatest lustre it had been since Solomon's time.*

Confer.
p 16.

I shall not say here, that the Divine Worship under the reign of *Josaphat*, was not in such great lustre neither, but that the Scripture informs us, *The high places were not taken away; for the people offered still, and burnt incense in the high places*, which was a worship forbidden by God. But not to insist upon this, I say in the first place, This instance is a very good proof, that the greatest part of this exterior Society, professing themselves to be the people of God, that is, ten tribes out of twelve, were corrupted to that degree, that *Elijah* complain'd he only was left. Which shews, that we must not always conclude Truth and Purity to be of that side where the number is most; nor suppose it impossible, for what we call *the Visible Church*, to be corrupted, at least as to the greatest part of Professors. Secondly, I could heartily have wish'd, that *M. de Condom*

1 King. 22.
43.

Rom 11.
2, 5.

Confer.
Page 12.

1 Kings
19. 14.

would have reflected a little upon the use St. Paul made of this instance of Israel in *Elijah's* time; because it is exactly the same with what the Protestant Ministers make of it now. It was objected to the Apostle, that from his Principles it would follow, that God had cast away his people, in as much as the whole Body of that people had crucified Jesus Christ, and walked contrary to his new Religion; if therefore he would undertake to maintain his new Religion was the Right, he must at the same time own, that God had forsaken his Church. No, (says he) *God hath not cast away his people, for there is a remnant through the election of Grace*; and hereupon he alledges what happened to Israel heretofore in *Elijah's* time, when God reserved to himself Seven thousand men in secret, that had not bowed the knee to *Baal*. What can be more exactly parallel than the use he makes of this passage, and that the Protestants make? 'Tis objected to us, that from our Principles it follows, God hath cast away his Church, because the whole Body of that Church condemns our Reformation, and walks contrary to our new Religion. They teach that this visible exterior Church may cease to be upon Earth, says M. de Condom. No such matter, say we, God hath not deserted his Church, there is a remnant according to the Election of Grace, and in proof of this we urge the instance of Israel heretofore, in *Elijah's* time. If to charge the Protestants with unsincerity for alledging this, were at the same time to charge St. Paul. If the exception of *Judah*, where the worship in *Elias* his time was in great lustre, were good, and to be admitted against us, the same was also good and to be admitted against the Apostle. For what do we more than he did? or what do we say, but what we have learnt from Him ought to be said in this Case? Let St. Paul then acquit himself, and he shall in doing so, acquit us. Now this is done without any difficulty, for he need only Answer, that the exception does not make at all against him. The business is to know, which is the true people of God, his true Church which he never forsakes. Now it is plain by God's answer to *Elijah*, that this is not the Croud, the vast Number, not the party of greatest strength, or which makes most noise in the World, but some persons reserved, *a remnant according to the election of Grace*, these are his true people, and his true Church. Tho *Judah* had still maintain'd the Divine Worship in its greatest lustre, yet does not this detract from the truth of God's declaration made to *Elias*, viz. that his true people, his true Church consists of this Remnant, or these Persons reserved. This is all St. Paul desires; this is likewise all the Protestants desire to make of it. Lord, says *Elijah*, they have broken down thine Altars, and slain thy Prophets with the sword, and I only am left. Had God made his Church to consist in an exterior Body of men, who should preserve his worship in a constant uninterrupted purity, what

what could have been more natural than to return this answer, Wherefore dost thou complain, have I not still my Church in *Judah*? The Cardinal *du Perron* would have replied exactly thus, and from him it is that *M. de Condom* hath borrowed this shift. Yet God answers in a very different manner, he fixes his true Church, not in the exterior Body, but in the Persons he *had reserved*. The Apostle takes the advantage of an Argument against what the Jews in his time objected, and we in like manner take the same advantage against what is objected to us now.

Afterward *M. de Condom* frames to himself an Objection drawn from the Disorders and horrible Corruptions predominant in *Judah* during the Reign of *Abaz*, who shut up the Temple of God, and caused *Urijah* the Priest to sacrifice unto Idols; and afterward under *Manassch*, whose Impieties transcended those of *Abaz*. To which he answers, first, That *Isaiah*, who lived during all the Reign of *Ahaz*, for all these abominations of the King, of the Priest *Urijah*, and almost all the People, never separated from the Communion of *Judah*; which shews, that there is always a People of God, from whose Communion 'tis never lawful to separate. Laying aside, for one minute the business of Separation, we must in the mean time of necessity grant, that this exterior Society, called the People of God, were prodigiously corrupted in matters of Faith and Worship, that their Corruption was publick and general, diffused, not among some private Persons only, but through the whole Body of the ordinary Ministry. So that the true Church, that to which the Promises of God belong, that which must not be interrupted, nor totally fail, must be acknowledged to consist, not in the whole Body of this exterior Society, but merely in the Body of true Believers, who it is possible may sometimes be reduced to a very inconsiderable number of this Society, and scarce make any Figure at all in it. We must likewise acknowledge it possible, for such an universal Corruption to happen in this Society, that there shall be no longer any thing perfectly sound and entire in it, that is, nothing in the publick Worship without some tincture of impurity. For at the same time that *Abaz* Reigned in *Judah*, and the Corruption was general there, *Pekah* was King in *Israel*, who (says the Scripture) *did evil in the sight of the Lord, and departed not from the sins of Jeroboam who made Israel to sin*. So that the publick Worship was then corrupted every where, as well in *Israel* as *Judah*. What then became of *M. de Condom's* exterior Church, which he says can never err in her Determinations? Where was then that Church, which does not only maintain some truth, but teaches and maintains all truth? Well, but still *M. de Condom* tells us, *Isaiah* never separated from the Communion of this People, no more than did the rest of the Prophets.

2 King. 16.
and Ch.
21.

Confer.
Page 16.

2 Kings
15. 28.

Confer.
Page 16.

Now

Now this very thing strengthens our Argument, and renders it impregnable; because, from hence it necessarily follows, that there was not in any place of the World besides, any publick Worship, nor any Exterior Body at all, little or great, that served God in perfect Purity. So that we must inevitably allow one of these two things; Either that the Church was at that time utterly extinct, or that it was preserved in this Remnant, which we see God spoke of to *Elijah*. The first of these destroys the Promises of God; the second establishes our Opinion, and quite overthrows that of the *Romanists*.

Confer.
Page 17.

Let us now examine how *Isaiah* and the other Prophets, not separating from the Body of the People, is to be understood. Can we suppose them to have been partakers of the Wickednesses that then prevailed in the publick Worship? By no means. *These Prophets*, M. de Condom says, *reprehended and detested the impieties of the People, but separated not from the Communion*. The meaning of which is, that they separated negatively, tho not positively; they refused to partake of the Impieties in the publick Worship; but they did not set up another sort of publick Worship distinct by themselves: I grant it. But then we must also grant, that when the Worship is corrupted, the Church may subsist by means of such a Negative Separation, and that this is sufficient for its preservation. Now this is exactly what we are of Opinion was done, during the Corruptions of the *Latin Ministry* all along before the Reformation. But still it may be said, *These Prophets* never proceeded so far as a *positive* Separation, and you have. I answer, The Reason they never separated positively, was peculiar to themselves, as M. de Condom himself acknowledges, to wit, that over and above the real and spiritual Covenant, God had entered into with such as were true Believers among that People; there was besides another Exterior and Temporal one, in which the whole Nation were concern'd, founded upon their being the Blood and Progeny of *Abraham*, and all bearing about them the Mark of this Covenant (to wit, Circumcision) in their Flesh; so that the true Believers were obliged upon this account to continue in Communion with the People, and could not separate from them positively, by reason of that common Covenant which they might not break. But the case is otherwise with the Christian Church, which hath but one Covenant with God, and that a real and spiritual one, of true Faith, and sincere Regeneration; when, therefore we can no longer maintain this Covenant, by living amongst a People, and under a Ministry which is become contrary thereto, there lies a necessity upon us of separating by a *positive* Separation.

And

And yet *M. de Condom* pretends to make some advantage of this very thing. He says, *The Succession of that Ancient People was kept up by carnal Generation,—and so, tho the Priests, and almost all the People should have prevaricated, the State of Gods People subsisted always in an exterior Form, whether they would or no.—But 'tis not so with the new People, whose exterior Form consists in nothing but the Profession of Jesus Christ's Doctrine: So that if the Confession of the true Faith should be extinct for one only moment, the Church, which has no Succession but by the Continuance of this Profession, would be wholly extinct, without any possibility of ever rising again, either in its People or Pastors, but by a new Mission.*

Confer.
Page 17.

I confess, That carnal Generation was in that Ancient People, enough to keep up their Succession in Quality of Gods People, with Relation to that temporal Covenant common to them all. Tho it be true too, that this Quality was but very imperfectly discerned in times of general Prevarications; because, if they were then Gods *temporal* People, they were a vicious and prevaricating People. But, I say, that carnal Generation was not enough to maintain among them a Succession, with respect to the spiritual Covenant; because the Succession here, could be preserved no other way, but by a Participation of the same Faith, and the same Charity. Now the Covenant in which the new People live, is not any longer a carnal one, but purely and solely Spiritual; and consequently, the Succession in it, can only consist in this perpetual Participation of one and the same Faith, and one and the same Charity. In this particular, the Condition of both old and new People are alike. As therefore in that Ancient People, there did still continue a Succession of Faith and Charity, tho the publick Worship and ordinary Ministry were full of strange Corruptions; in like manner hath such a Succession always continued in the new, even in the midst of all Corruptions. God had then his methods of teaching *the reserved*, and keeping them from partaking in the publick Prevarications; the same he hath still, and useth to the same purpose, altho the Ministry and publick Worship have not preserved their Purity. I confess, should a full and perfect desertion of Christianity ever have happened throughout all the Christian World, and not one true Believer be left upon the face of the Earth, a man might say, the Church had been utterly extinct. But blessed be God, it never came to that. We acknowledg that God hath all along preserved his Remnant, according to the Election of Grace. We acknowledg too, that the publick Ministry was never so totally corrupted, but still all that was necessary for the Instruction of Believers, was so far kept up, that the spiritual Succession was always preserved intire, by receiving from the Ministers hands nourishment sufficient unto spiritual Life on the one hand, and casting away all the

the evil and impure Mixtures of the Ministry on the other hand; and this is that negative Separation we spoke of before. The exterior Form of Jesus Christs true Church, does not so absolutely consist in the Ministries making profession of Faith pure, and void of Error, that it cannot otherwise subsist any longer. I confess, when this is done, the Church is in a happy Condition, and (if I may so say) a Condition of Health. But when this is not done, the exterior Form does not presently perish upon that account, because this consists in our being able to say, *That is the Body where God nourishes and cherishes his true Believers*, as I have already shewn when treating of my second question. Could we no longer say thus, the Church would have lost its external Form, and its Succession have ceased to be visible. But this might at all times be said, even when the Ministry and publick Worship was most corrupted, and so the Churches visible Succession was never quite lost. It hath indeed been mightily lessened and obscured, in Proportion to the Errors that prevailed in the Ministry; and this was the Churches Condition of Misery, it's sick and languishing Condition, which nevertheless went not so far, as to hinder this Succession.

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Page 17.

M. de Condom goes on. *I will not say the true Faith, and true Worship of God, could be wholly abolisht in the People of Israel, so as that God had no more any true Servants on Earth. But I find on the contrary, 'tis clear, that maugre the Corruption, God still reserved to himself a sufficient number of Servants, who participated not in the Idolatry.* Herein we agree; for neither do we say, That the true Faith, and true Worship could ever have been wholly abolisht among Christians; but on the contrary, that maugre the Corruption, God hath always reserved to himself a sufficient number of Servants, who have not participated in the Prevarications of the rest. So far the case is the same. *'Tis not to be imagined, proceeds he, that Gods Servants, and the true Faith, were preserved only in secret; but that in all the Succession of the Ancient People, the true Doctrine always shone forth. For there was a continual Succession of Prophets, who instead of adhering to the Peoples Errors, or dissembling them, rose up against them with force; and this Succession was so constant, that the Holy Ghost fears not to say, That God rose up Night and Morning, and daily admonisht the People by the Mouth of his Prophets.*

Confer.
Page 17,
18.

2 Chron.
36. 15.
Jer. 11. 7.
xxv. 3, 4.

M. de Condom must give us leave to make some Observations upon this Passage. The first of which is, that in the Corruptions of Israel heretofore, when the publick Worship, and ordinary Ministry, suffered such Depravation, there was not any where in the World another publick Worship, or another Ministry, that was preserved in Purity and Perfection: So that if men must needs have lookt for the Church in the Body

Body of the Peoples living under their ordinary Pastors, and in the publick worship (as he is of opinion we now must under the Gospel) there could not have been any longer a Church upon Earth; because his own Principle maintains that, *if this visible and exterior Church composed of Pastors and People, do not keep and teach all truth*, (that is, if She teach any thing that is false) *She is not the Church*.

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Page 12.

I observe, secondly, That in the very same place, where God is said to rise up Night and Morning, and daily admonish the People by the Mouth of his Prophets; it is also said, *That all the chief of the Priests, and the People trespassed wonderfully, according to all the Abominations of the Heathen, and polluted the House of the Lord, which he had sanctified in Jerusalem*. It is said further too, *That they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets*. Which shews that both People and Priests were generally corrupted, and the Church reduced to a Remnant. I confess, some certain Persons of this Remnant did not keep silence; but instead of adhering to, or dissembling the Peoples Errors, opposed them strongly. But besides, that a great many more, no question, sighed in secret for these things; it is manifest, that this Remnant did not make a separate Body by themselves, nor exercise any publick Worship different from the rest. And consequently the Churches visibility, tho not wholly extinct, yet was mightily darkned and diminished, and that is all we would infer from hence.

2 Chron.
36. 14, 16.

My third Observation is, That there was indeed, in that Ancient People, a continued Succession of Prophets; and as *M. de Condom* says, a *Prophetical Ministry ordinary with the People, where the Prophets made an Order always subsisting, whence God continually drew Divine Men, by whose Mouth he spake loudly and publickly to all his People*. But then we must say withal, that the Body of this Order of Prophets were every whit as corrupt, as the Priests and People. This cannot be denied, for the Scripture affirms it expressly. *The Priests said not, where is the Lord; and they that should Minister the Law knew me not; the Pastors also offended against me, and the Prophets prophesied in Baal. The Prophets prophesie lies, and the Priests bear rule by their means, and my People love to have it so. I have heard what the Prophets said, that Prophesie lies in my Name, saying, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the hearts of the Prophets; that Prophesie lies? Yea, they are Prophets of the deceit of their own heart. Which think to cause my People to forget my Name by their Dreams, which they tell every Man to his Neighbour, as their Fathers have forgotten my Name for Baal*. And a vast number of Passages to the like purpose. So that we cannot say, there was at that time any visible Body that opposed the Corruptions, or maintained the Worship of God in its genuine Purity. The Prophets, by whom God spoke so

Confer.
Page 19.

Jer. 2. 8.

Jer. 5. 8.

Jer. 23. 25,
26, 27.

loudly and publicly, were only lookt upon as private Persons, of an Opinion different from the generality of the Society. And therefore, how loudly and publicly soever they spoke, if in order to the constituting a Visible Church, it be necessary to find a Body or Society of Men, making Profession of pure Doctrine, *M. de Condom* must acknowledg, that there was not then any Visible Church in the World.

And now, *Sir*, give me leave, I beseech you, to ask, with what pretence to Reason men can still cavil at this instance of the Corruptions in *Israel* heretofore, and not own it for a sensible Proof, that confirms most of the Truths established in the former part of this Letter. In it you see the several Bodies that made up the ordinary Ministry, all of them ensnared in Idolatry, and false Worship. In it you see the whole Body of the People blindly following the exorbitancies of their Guides. In it you see the true Church of God subsisting, not in an exterior Society, enjoying its Ministers, Assemblies, and publick Worship peculiar to its self; but in some reserved Persons, that still maintained their Integrity in the midst of all these Confusions. In it you see God himself, and after him, *St. Paul*, making his true People to consist in these Persons so reserved. All this proves, and proclaims to the World, That the true Church consists of true Believers only; That this Church is not otherwise visible, but as mixt with wicked Men and Reprobates; That this mixture does sometimes so obscure it, that it is very difficult to come to a knowledg of it; That it does nevertheless still subsist even in that state of obscurity; And, that in these true Believers, and *Persons whom God has reserved*, he does fulfil the Promises of Perpetuity made to the Church.

I close this Letter with sincere Protestations, That it is much to my dissatisfaction, that I find my self obliged to put Pen to paper, in a Dispute against *M. de Condom*. I have all along had, and ever shall have, not only all the Respect for him, which is due to his Quality and Station; but more especially, I esteem his Virtue so universally acknowledged, and admire his Perfections, and the excellent Gifts God hath imparted to him, as they really deserve. In our Conference, I observed in him, a Wit lively and piercing, a clear Apprehension, a proper and easy way of Expression; and especially, an extraordinary Candour and Civility of Behaviour. He maintain'd his Principles with all the strength and advantage imaginable, made them look as fair and specious, as it was possible for any man, and managed them with abundance of Skill and Address. In a word, I was strangely taken with the Accomplishments of his Person, and did often feel such kind Inclinations and Wishes, as Men should do upon such Occasions. My Sentiments of Honour and Respect for him are sincere, but the more they

they are so, the more frequent I must complain of one thing, inserted by him in his Discourse with *Mademoiselle de Duras*, and that is, *That in our Religion we believe, there is a point of time when a Christian is obliged to doubt whether the Scripture was inspired by God, whether the Gospel is a Truth, or a Fable; whether Jesus Christ was a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth.* This Discourse, I confess, was by no means agreeable to the Character of his Temper; and I was amazed to find that a Prelate, who desires to be thought a man of Equity towards us, could entertain such an Opinion of us. In which of our Books hath he met with such an abominable Doctrine? I know indeed, this is a consequence he pretends to deduce from our Principles; but I shall venture to say, His consequence can never be made out with such evidence, as may allow him peremptorily to affirm, without any other warrant for it, *That in our Religion we believe there is a point of time when a Christian is obliged to doubt whether the Scripture was inspired by God; whether the Gospel is a Truth, or a Fable; whether Jesus Christ was a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth.*

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Page 13.

When he shall think fit to consult us upon this Point, we shall declare to him with one Consent, that we do not only not believe this Proposition, but that we have a perfect Abhorrence of it; and whenever he shall please to let us know how he understands this to be deduced from our Principles, we shall make it appear to him, that he is under a great mistake, and that the quite contrary must be inferred from them.

I am, Sir, &c.

F I N I S.

A N
A N S W E R
T O
M. de M E A U X's B O O K.
E N T I T U L E D,
A Conference with Mr. C L A U D E.

A Relation of what pass in the Conference held by the Bishop of Condom, Preceptor to the Dauphin; and Monsieur Claude, the first of March, 1678. At the Countess of Roye's House, the Countesses of Lorge, and Roye, Mademoiselle de Duras, the Marquess of Miremont, Mademoiselle de Roucy, and Mr. Cotton, being there present.

SOME Days before this Conference, Mademoiselle de Duras going to visit Mr. Claude, let him know that she was under some scruples upon the account of her Religion, and took out of her pocket a Paper lately put into her hands, in which were contained some Passages out of St. *Augustine* concerning the Eucharist: To which Mr. Claude replied, and then by other Passages of the same Father, demonstrated to her, that his opinion as to this particular, was directly the same that is taught at *Charenton*: And thereupon she seemed to be well satisfied.

The next Day after Mr. Claude seeing her at the Countess of Roye's, she after a long Discourse told him, that she was mighty desirous he would admit of a Conference with some Doctor of the Romish Perswa-

2
A Relation of the Conference

sion at a time when she might be by. Mr. *Claude* returned, that this was not usual; that such Conferences might be of very ill consequence, and that she could not but be sensible that the present Circumstances of the Reformed in *France*, and especially at *Paris*, required they should behave themselves with much prudence and caution. But (says she) how would you behave your self if you should light upon one of these Gentlemen accidentally, and be put upon matters of Religion? You would not desert your Cause? I would in such a case, says Mr. *Claude*, decline entering into Disputes as much as I could; but if I were constrained to it, I would give an account of my Faith; and upon such sudden occasions we are not used to run away. But Madam (proceeded he) what reason is there for asking me this? We are not going about any such thing.

Two Days after the Countess of *Roye* told Mr. *Claude*, she understood there were some pains taken to procure a meeting that should seem accidental between him and *M. de Condom*, and she thought it convenient to give him this notice. Were I desirous to meet any man (said he) I had rather it should be *M. de Condom* than another, because he is a Person of Wisdom, Honour, and Judgment, and one for whom I have a particular Respect and Esteem; but in regard of the Publick Capacity I am in, methinks this business deserves some Consideration. A little while after he imparted it to two of his Friends, and all three together paying a Visit to a Person of Quality of extraordinary Merit and great Prudence, it was generally agreed, that Mr. *Claude's* best way was to decline this meeting with *M. de Condom*. The Reasons alledged were these, That it was already known Mademoiselle de *Duras* was perfectly disposed to alter her Religion; that in all probability she desired a Conference only for the greater Pomp and formality of the thing, and to make use of this as a pretence; that let the issue be what it would, she would most certainly go over, and pretend it had not given her satisfaction, and that this would certainly be a piece of the next publick News.

The Person of Quality whose advice was asked, undertook to Visit the Countess of *Roye*, and make her sensible of these Reasons. She indeed shewed her self apprehensive of them, and easily saw their strength and drift. But all that could be done was too weak to bring Mademoiselle de *Duras* off from her first Design. The Lady complained extremely of her being deserted, and that this was the very thing she had often been upbraided with, that the Reformed Ministers durst not shew their heads before the Catholick Doctors. By this, and the addition of Tears too, she endeavoured all manner of ways to move her

her Sister, solemnly protesting, that, did but People know what a world of good this would do her, they could not certainly deny her so great an act of Charity.

This engaged the Countess of Roze to concern her self for the bringing about a meeting between *Monsieur de Condom* and Mr. Claude, and she did it so very well, that Mr. Claude found himself under a necessity of consenting to it, that so he might not expose himself to the insolence of those of a different persuasion. She assured him *M. de Condom* desired this meeting should seem merely by chance, that the World should not be acquainted with it, and that they should not make it their business to talk of it on one side nor other.

On Tuesday the first day of March, about two in the Afternoon, Mr. Claude went all alone to the Countess of Roze's, and a little after came in the Mareschall de Lorge, Mademoiselle de Duras, the Marquess of Miremont, and Mr. Cotton. About a quarter of an hour after, came in *M. de Condom* by himself.

When the first Complements were paid, and the Company had taken their Seats, *M. de Condom* directed himself to Mr. Claude, and told him, That he had for some time longed to see him to offer some things which were practised by men of his Religion, but such as he apprehended to be directly contrary to their Principles. That these consisted, first in an Article of their Discipline, which enjoyns, that in case any difference arise in points of Doctrine, the Question shall be decided in the Consistory, and by the Word of God: If they do not acquiesce in the Judgment of this Court, it shall be referred to a Provincial Synod, and from thence to a National Synod, *where a full and final resolution of the case shall be given by the Word of God; and such as refuse to submit to this, shall be excommunicated.* Secondly, he produced a formulary of a Letter Missive to the National Synods, framed in the Synod of Vitre, and which was to be a pattern for all the Provinces to follow for the future, by which they promise *submission to all the resolutions of that holy Assembly, to obey and execute every particular of them, as being persuaded (says the Formulary) that God will preside there, and lead you into all truth and equity by his Holy Spirit, and by the Rule of his Word.* Besides that, he produced an Act of the National Synod held at Charenton in the Year 1644. where the Independents opinion is condemned, who will not allow that particular Congregations should depend upon the Authority of Colloquies and Synods, but that every one should be governed by Laws within it self. Now this Act expressly declares, that that Sect opens a door to all manner of irregularities, and extravagances, that it deprives men of all means of remedying disorders,

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A Relation of the Conference

and would, if admitted, make as many several Religions, as Parishes. Lastly, he produced an Act of the National Synod at *Sainte-foy*, by which, upon occasion of some overtures for a re-union with those of the *Ausburg* Confession, the Synod assigns Deputies to go and confer with them; to whom full power is granted, to agree upon, and determine whatever points should be debated, whether in matters of Doctrine, or any other thing that might concern the Good and Peace of all the Churches, even so far as to consent, that their Decisions should be inserted in their Confessions of Faith. From all which he inferred, That even those of Mr. *Claude's* Religion, did acknowledge a necessity, that in order to the preservation of Unity in the Church, men should submit their Judgments, and pay an entire and absolute obedience to Ecclesiastical Assemblies, without leaving themselves at liberty to examine their determinations, or judg whether they were agreeable to the Word of God or no; and that upon refusal of this Obedience, it was just to proceed to Excommunication. That this was exactly what the Church of *Rome* would have, and that she desired no more; But that we nevertheless in our disputes with her, advance a quite contrary Principle. He therefore entreated from Mr. *Claude* a distinct answer to this Point, and would quietly hear what he could say to it. Adding moreover, that Mr. *Claude* ought to be the more ready to reply upon this subject, because no new thing was proposed to him, the same Acts, and the same consequences that he now deduced from them, being to be found in his Exposition of the Catholick Doctrine.

Mr. *Claude* first of all replied, That although his coming thither was not with intentions to hold a Conference strictly, and by rule, yet he was extreamly glad that he had now an opportunity given him, of testifying to *M. de Condom* how much he esteemed his person; and that having no particular worth of his own, he thought it a great honour, that a Prelate of *M. de Condom's* Character should single him out, to engage in Controversy with him. That he would endeavour to give him satisfaction in each of the points now propounded to him; and that, if in the following part of the Discourse any expression should escape from him which might be offensive to *M. de Condom*, he protested before-hand, that it should be much against his will and design.

To this *M. de Condom* replied in very civil and obliging terms; and Mr. *Claude* then resuming the discourse, told him; That in general, whatever he had alledged just before, did by no means infer such a blind and entire submission to the determinations of Ecclesiastical Assemblies, as the Church of *Rome* pretends to impose; That we must distinguish between two sorts of Authorities, the one supream and unlimited;

mitted ; the other limited and depending ; to the former we owe a full and perfect obedience ; to the other a conditional one only. The former *M. de Condom* was sensible, is by the *Protestants* attributed to God alone, speaking to us in the Holy Scriptures ; and that the second was it they allowed the Pastors of the Church, considered either single and by themselves, or met together in a Synod or Council. That their Authority, being only Ministerial, is restrained two ways ; one is, That they must frame their decisions, not of their own heads, nor after their own fancies, but according to the Word of God ; the other, That they must always allow the persons under their Jurisdiction the priviledg of examining those decisions, that so they may know, whether they be really agreeable to God's Word : Whence it follows, that the obedience due to them ever goes upon this condition, that they have not swerved from the Word of God ; That the Authority of Pastors, and Assemblies composed of such, cannot extend further, than that of our Parliaments in the State of *France*, who are not empowered to alter old Laws, and enact new ones ; and whom we are priviledged, nay, obliged to disobey, so oft as their Injunctions are prejudicial to the King's Service, and the Allegiance we owe him : That the Authority of Church-Assemblies can at most be, but as that of Fathers over Children, because both God and Nature have invested Fathers with it ; The Fathers have a right to Act in their Childrens names, because they have a right of Educating and Commanding them ; and the Scripture frequently enjoyns to Children, a readines to learn, and obedience to their Fathers ; yet does it not follow from hence, that Children are not priviledged and obliged to examine their Fathers Instructions and Commands, whether they be true or false, just or unjust, and what shall appear to be false and unjust, that to reject. That nevertheless the Authority of Pastors and their Assemblies, is really very great, as is likewise that of Parliaments and Fathers, notwithstanding their Authorities are under some limitations. That the Pastors are as publick Trustees for the keeping God's Word, appointed to study, and meditate upon it continually, thence to deduce necessary truths for the peoples improvement, and to save private men a labour, which they cannot always attend to, because diverted and perplexed by the business of the World. That so long as the Pastors discharged this Duty well, the people were obliged to obey and submit to their words ; but when they deviated from it, they were to be looked upon as false and treacherous persons.

Afterwards he came particularly to those Acts *M. de Condom* had urged, and told him ; That the Clause of Submission contain'd in the

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Letters Missive to National Synods, must be understood according to this Principle, and under these Limitations, because grounded upon this Supposal, That all things would be managed there according to God's Word. For those expressions, *Being persuaded, that God will preside among you, and lead you into all Truth by his Holy Spirit, and by the rule of his Word*, do imply a persuasion of Charity and Equity; for we ought always to presume the best of such Assemblies, and hope that God will preside over them, and that they will acquit themselves of their duty, till experience shews the contrary: But all this does not imply so entire a submission, as for a Man to deprive himself of all right to examine their Resolutions. As to that Act which condemns the Independents, it is (said he) extremely Just. For tho Assemblies do not arrive at an Infallibility, yet are not they presently to be utterly abolished. 'Tis a human Order indeed, but yet such an Order as God himself hath settled for the preservation of his Church, and to desert it therefore is criminal. And yet we do not think it follows from hence, that the determinations of the Assemblies exact a blind and implicit Obedience; nor that the Synod of *Charenton* intended any such thing. And then for the Synod at *Saintes*'s deputing four persons to confer with those of the *Ausburg* Confession, and the full power given them, you can make no advantage of it. For those Deputies were in the nature of Ambassadors, who are sent by the King with full Commission to offer Proposals, hold Treaties, and agree upon Conclusions; or as Plenipotentiaries sent to negotiate a Peace. Let their power be never so full, or call them Plenipotentiaries as long as you please, still this condition is constantly and naturally understood, that they do nothing against the interest of the persons that commissioned them, and to these their Acts must of necessity return, for the obtaining their approbation and ratification, without which their Treatings would signify nothing at all. And this was the meaning of that full power conferr'd by the Synod upon their Deputies, to hear those of the Confession of *Ausburg*, to hearken to their Proposals, their Complaints, their Offers, and in return to make others to them; to receive from them Explications of difficulties in Controversy, and to give them back theirs; nay, to come to an agreement with them if they could, yet not so, as either to become absolute Masters of their Faith, or blindly receive whatever they should agree upon. For in all affairs of this kind, there is naturally implied, a Clause of recurring to the Judgment of the persons Commissioning, and a necessity of their ratifying them. Mr. *Claude* added besides, this Consideration. Suppose the true sense of an Act of the Church of *Rome* were called in Question, (a Canon of the Council

cil of Trent for instance) *M. de Condom* would think it more reasonable, that the sense should be taken from him than *Mr. Claude*, because the Question is put concerning the sense of a Church that *M. de Condom* is a Member of, and therefore in all probability he must understand it better than one of another Church. Therefore, *Sir*, said he, I expect the same Justice from you, in taking the sense of these Acts now in Dispute from me, provided the sense I put upon them do not disagree with the Doctors of my Communion, or be not manifestly false, and contradictory to the rest of our Principles. Now if the sense I put upon these Acts be not any of these, you have not, in my opinion, any right to refuse it, or to frame to your self any other different from it.

M. de Condom replied, saying, that he would begin where *Mr. Claude* left off, because that what he had urged just before, carried some appearance of Truth, and made a quick impression upon the mind, but had not really any thing of solid Argument in it. That, were the matter in hand any Explication of their particular Rites and Ceremonies, in Preaching the Word, and Administring the Sacraments, what *Mr. Claude* said might be allowed for Truth, and in that point he would believe him, as a person better acquainted with the matter; Nay, that he did not go about to debar him the liberty of explaining the sense of those that compiled the Discipline and the forementioned Acts after his own way; That he was sensible they denied an entire submission to the Church, and such as precludes all Examination; But this he would say, that the very men who denied this absolute submission in Speculation, were forced to own and establish it in their practice. That so they contradicted themselves, and that this was the thing he pretended to prove, and in which he was by no means bound to believe *Mr. Claude*: For if the matter in hand now, were to demonstrate any Contradictions in the opinions of the Catholick Church, he would not desire that His Explications might be thought of Authority sufficient, nor deny *Mr. Claude* the freedom of making what inferences he thought fit from the Council's own words.

M. de Condom stopping there, *Mr. Claude* replied, That, since it was evident, that the persons who made those Acts, denied any submission was due to the determinations of Church-Assemblies, without any Examination at all, the advantage was thus far at least on his side, that *M. de Condom* himself had acknowledged, His Explanation of those Acts was agreeable with the Principles of the Protestants which made them; so that there was more reason for his accepting that sense, than for the framing to himself another, and such a one as contradicted these Principles; That, supposing the business in Controversy to be an Act of the

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Romish Church, he should not scruple to admit *M. de Condom's* explanation, provided the words of the Act did not oppose it, and in that case he might be allowed to infer a Contradiction. That if *M. de Condom* would proceed thus, as to the Acts before urged, he should be glad to see what grounds he had for this pretended Contradiction.

M. de Condom said, this would easily be made appear. That he would show this Contradiction with relation to their Discipline, which on one side ordains, That differences in Doctrine should be decided in the Consistory by the Word of God; that it was also her meaning, that this decision was made by the Word of God in the Provincial Synod, as well as the National; and yet on the other side, if men do not acquiesce in the determination of a Consistory, or a Provincial Synod, it orders, things should continue as they were till a National one be convened; in which it says, *a full and final resolution shall be given by the Word of God, and if they submit not to this, they shall be cut off from the Church.* Whence it is evident, that the submission required to a National Synod, was not founded on the Word of God, considered abstractedly as such, because both Consistory and Provincial Synod were supposed to determine by the Word of God, and yet an Appeal from them was allow'd; But that it was founded on the Word of God, so far forth, as That was explained and interpreted by the last judgment of the Church; that is, because this is the last and final resolution; and consequently upon the Authority of the Assembly, considered by it self. Now this, said he, evidently contradicts that Principle, which denies there is an absolute submission due to the sentence of the Church. Of this the Discipline it self was a confirmation, in that it appointed no Excommunication for such as stood out against the determinations of a Consistory and Provincial Synod, and yet did, for such as refused to submit to the decrees of a National one.

The same (proceeded he) is plain from that Letter Missive to the National Synod. For how can men promise and swear submission to whatever should be agreed upon, and yet not suppose a full and perfect Submission owing to the Church? To urge, this Submission proceeds from a perswasion, that God will preside in it by his Spirit, and his Word; and to swear upon this account, is to urge, that this perswasion is grounded upon God's expresse Promise, to direct his Church in her last determination, by his Holy Spirit, and after an Infallible manner. This very thing, said he, is plain from the National Synod of *Charenton's* Act against the Independents. The Reason they make use of, that suffering their Principle to take place, might produce as many several Religions as Parishes, concludes for an absolute Obedi-

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ence to the decisions of Synods; since allowing private persons to examine the last determinations, there might spring not only as many several Religions as Parishes, but as many as there are persons, and consequently no means would be left for preserving the unity either of the Faith, or of the Church.

For what relates to the Deputies nominated by the Synod of *Sainte-foy*, to go and confer with those of the *Ausburg* Confession; he said, he did sincerely acknowledg, that the Synod, tho it gave them never so large a commission, did not however intend it should ever be in their power to subvert all, and if I may so say, to turn things topsy turvy; That he believed the Synods meaning was really, that whatever was done by the Deputies should be referred to them, and that there is a necessity all things of this nature should be ratified. But still it was very amazing, and a thing which Mr. *Claude* had not answered to, that they should proffer to insert their Deputies conclusions with the *Lutherans*, in their publick Confessions of Faith. For this argued them doubting as to their Confession of Faith, which yet, they tell us, contains nothing but the pure Word of God, and in that there can be nothing that requires a change, &c. Do you think Sir said he, that the Articles of your Confession of Faith may be changed?

When M. de Condom had left off speaking, Mr. *Claude* said, he would answer to each particular of his discourse, and intreated he would please to hear him quietly. And first of all he said, That M. de Condom put a wrong construction upon that Article of the Discipline, which declares, that if men do not acquiesce in the decisions of a Consistory, nor those of a Provincial Synod, *Things shall continue in the same posture, till a National one be convened, in which a full and final resolution shall be given by the Word of God; and they who refuse to acquiesce in This, shall be cut off from the Church.* For the reason of This, said he, is not, either that there ought not to be the same care taken, that the Consistories, or Provincial Synods determinations should be made by the word of God, as well as those of the National; nor that this Word hath not as much Authority at one time as another, whether declared in a consistory, or Provincial Synod, or a National one; nor that a full and perfect obedience is not due to this only, precisely considered as such: But this method of proceeding (added he) was constituted for two reasons, very different from what you pretend. First, because it is highly probable, that the search made into Gods Word concerning the matter in controversy, may be less exact and sagacious in a Consistory, than it would in a Synod composed of all the Ministers in a whole Province; and so again by the same reason, less exact and sagacious in a

Provincial Synod, than in a National, which is usually made up of all the most ingenious and learned men in the Kingdom. The other Reason is, That men may possibly be prepossessed against a Consistory, so as not to hearken to it so readily and impartially as they should; which is not so likely in respect of a Provincial Synod, which will be thought less apt to be sway'd by interest, passions or personal prejudices, and consequently they will be more quietly heard; Lastly, these kind of passions and private Interests being still less likely to happen in a National Synod, consisting of persons living remote from one another, and coming from all quarters of the Kingdom, 'tis very probable men will not be prepossessed against them, and consequently, that they will receive the Word of God at their mouths, that they will be more ready to learn, and better disposed to obey them. He said therefore, that this method was taken for the avoiding as much as was possible two inconveniences; one was to prevent the last determinations being given lightly, inconsiderately, or with any mixture of humane passion and Interest: The other, that the parties concerned might not be hindred by any personal prejudices, from hearing and receiving the Word of God, with that obedience and faithful submission which is owing to it. But it could by no means be infer'd from hence, that, according to the meaning and intention of the Discipline, it was not always God's Word, as such, but the Authority of the Assembly, to which that Obedience must be paid. And moreover, that the decision of a National Synod, was for this reason called, *the last and final decision*, because according to humane methods, and the present course of things, there is nothing beyond it, to which we can have recourse.

As for the Letter of Mission to the National Synods, he replied, that did not infer an absolute submission, any more than the Act of their Discipline did, because there was in it the express condition of Judging according to the Word of God, in these words, *Being persuaded, as we are, that God will preside over you, by his Holy Spirit, and his Word.*

As to the Reason which the Synod of Charenton urged against the *Independents*, this, he said, did not at all imply a blind and implicit obedience. That the dependence which particular Churches have upon Colloquies and Synods was an external Order, which, tho it had not any sure and infallible means of preserving the Church in the unity of the Faith, was however of mighty convenience and use towards the doing it: And we ought always to take it for granted, that God's Blessing will go along with it, as being an order constituted by himself. That the *Independents* by throwing off this Order, do deprive themselves of these means, and wilfully expose themselves to the great inconvenience
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of having as many several Religions as Parishes; so that the Synod had good grounds for upbraiding them with it, as they did. That the Protestants principles were not liable to the same objection, who though they disown a blind obedience, and entire submission, do yet retain such external means as are most proper and expedient, for preserving the unity of the Faith. And whereas *M de Condom* pretended, that without entire obedience, it was possible, that as many several Religions might start up as there are Parishes; 'tis confess'd, this may come to pass, if we speak with respect to men only, notwithstanding the Order and Ecclesiastical Assemblies be kept up, because the mind of man is of its self subject to infinite Errors. But in respect of God, this cannot fall out so, for he, by his blessing on this external Order, and the Communication of one and the same spirit to his true Believers and Elect, does by this sure and infallible means preserve them in the unity of the same Faith, and consequently of the same Church. That Faith being not an humane, but a Divine thing, none but God alone can either produce, or preserve it in mens hearts. And this he infallibly does in the hearts of his Elect, by his Spirit, and such external means of the Ministry, as himself hath appointed; *For Paul planteth, and Apollo watereth, but God giveth the increase.* 1 Cor. 3 6.

Next he came to speak of the Deputies nominated by the Synod of *Sainte-foy*, to confer with the *Lutherans*; and said, That he was extremely pleased, with what *M. de Condom* had confess'd even now, *That they never intended to give them a power of turning all things topsy turvey*, as he had ingeniously express'd it; but that recourse must be had to the persons commissioning, and their ratification obtained. That he very humbly thank'd him for this sincere acknowledgment, which, as to this particular, resolv'd the whole Question, so that this Act could not now be alledged any more, for the blind obedience pretended to be infer'd from it. That besides this, his accusation against the Synod, for consenting to change their Confession of Faith, if taken in *M. de Condom's* sense, vanish'd into nothing: For there ought a distinction to be made, between what is essential in it, and what is not. The essential part of the Confession consists in the things themselves, called Articles, or points of Faith; and that which is not essential consists in the terms and modes of expression. That the Synod had Authority to consent, that the expressions in the Confession should be altered, that other things might be inserted which might illustrate and explain it, if this appeared to be useful, for the reducing men that had deviated from it: But the Synod never took upon them to alter any essential part of the Confession, for it continues in this respect unalterable, so far forth as it is agreeable to the Word of God.

Mr. *Claude* concluding his discourse, *M. de Condom* replied in the first place, that, notwithstanding what Mr. *Claude* said a little before, concerning the Order observed by the Discipline, it did however enjoin, that such as refused to acquiesce in the decisions of a National Synod, should be cut off from the Church; and that the Synod of *Dort* had actually cut off the *Arminians*; he desired therefore to know of Mr. *Claude* whether they were justly and lawfully cut off. Mr. *Claude* answered, that in his opinion the Synod of *Dorts* proceedings were very just. *M. de Condom* told him, This was all the Church of *Rome* desired; that she also acknowledged her self under an Obligation to judge according to the word of God, but this was not the matter in dispute. The main business was about the Sense and Explanation of that word, and that it was the Churches Province to give this Explanation, and private men's to rest satisfied with it; and if they did not, the Church dealt justly in excommunicating them. That it was thus the Protestants had been excommunicated in the Council of *Trent*.

As concerning the Letter of Mission to the National Synods, is it not (said he) a plain trick to swear Submission to them upon supposal or condition, that their Determinations shall be agreeable to Gods word? This is all mere trifling. What say you to it, Sir? Mr. *Claude* said, there was no trick at all, and he could discover nothing that was irregular in it. If I have a right notion of your Doctrine, replied *M. de Condom*, you hold, that a private Person may doubt of the Judgment of the Church, even when given in its last and highest Court of Jurisdiction. We do hold, said Mr. *Claude*, that no man can have an absolute certainty of Faith, that an Ecclesiastical Assembly shall give right Determinations, and upon this account that men may be allow'd to doubt. But withal, that men should notwithstanding, presume in favour of such an Assembly, and in this respect we cannot properly call it doubting, as hoping, and believing that it will judge a right. For Jesus Christ hath promised, all that seek shall find, and we ought to take it for granted, that they will discharge their duty in seeking aright, till Experience shews the contrary. There is therefore, an assurance of Charity and Equity, that in some Sense excludes doubt. But when we see Assemblies governed by Factions, Cabals, and temporal Interests, then sure we have a great deal of reason to doubt; as seeing men that have forsaken their Duty, and consequently are such, as cannot hope for any advantage from the blessing of God upon them. Let me beg of you Sir, said *M. de Condom* then, That we may let alone what is good for nothing, but to cast dust in our Eyes. What you said just now of Cabals and Factions, and private Interests, is of no use in the World, and only serves

serves to perplex the matter. I would know of you, put the case there appeared nothing at all of Factions, Cabals, nor Interest in an Assembly; but that all their proceedings were orderly, and regular; whether its Decisions ought to be received without examining them? No Sir, said Mr. *Claude*. Why then Sir, said he, I was in the right, to tell you that all your talk of Factions and Cabals signifies nothing. That does not follow neither (repl'd Mr. *Claude*) for notwithstanding there appear not any thing to weaken a mans Presumptions, that the Assembly will discharge their duty faithfully; and that for ought we can discover to the contrary, all things are carried regularly; yet, still this is no more than a humane Presumption, not able to give any certainty of belief, and consequently not precluding our Examination. But when we see Disorder and Corruption manifestly prevail in an Assembly, we can no longer presume in favour of such a one, and instead of hoping the best, we must fear the worst that can come from it. So that it is not without ground, that I spoke of Cabals and Factions. Here *M. de Condom* resuming the former method of his Discourse, said, It was false that the Independents did absolutely throw off all Ecclesiastical Assemblies; for they themselves held one, he said, at *London* in the year 1653. so that the Synod of *Charenton* could not condemn them upon that account; but merely for refusing to acknowledg that an entire Dependence and Submission was owing to Synods.

As for the Synod of *Sainte-fey*, proceeded he, if all the business had been no more than illustrating and explaining their Articles, as Mr. *Claude* would have it, what need these have been inserted in the Confession of Faith? Could not this be done by an Act of a Synod without altering the Confession? It is sure their design was to express that Article concerning the Lord's Supper in such ambiguous terms as both sides had agreed upon, and each might interpret to his own advantage, which hath been an expedient often attempted, but to no purpose. Now this is in reality, not barely to explain and illustrate the Confession of Faith, and by that means settle a mutual Toleration, but down right to alter it. And now (added he) all that men have to do is but to consider with themselves what opinion they ought to entertain of a Confession of Faith, which a whole National Synod consented to alter. That the matter between Mr. *Claude* and him, was at last come to such a pass, that the truth must presently appear on one side or other. That the Principle asserted by Mr. *Claude* was a Principle of Pride and intolerable Presumption. For is not this the very extremity of Pride, that mere single private Persons should san-

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cy themselves wiser and better able to understand the Scripture than a whole Ecclesiastical Assembly, a whole Council put together? And yet this was the unavoidable consequence of his opinion, which allowed private Persons a Privilege and Freedom to examine the Decisions of Councils. That an entire submission to the Church's judgment, and a full and implicate Obedience to that, was much more reasonable, and argued more of Christian Humility, than mens taking upon them to amend its Decisions.

It being now Mr. *Claude's* turn to speak, he told them, That their Discipline did indeed order such as refused submission, to be Excommunicated, after the last and final resolution had been given according to the Word of God in a National Synod Assembled: But it was no part of the Discipline's meaning, that this submission was due to the Authority of that Assembly abstractedly and as such; but, as he had before observed, to the Authority of Gods Word, according to which the Assemblies decision was to be formed, and this ever implies an Examination. The Excommunication therefore was just only upon supposal, that the Word of God had been followed, and never else. That the Excommunications pronounced by Councils had not really any thing of Justice or Efficacy, except when their determinations were founded on God's Word; and when they were not so, their sentences of Excommunication were unjust, and returned directly upon the head of those that thundered them out, according to St. Paul's Maximè, *If we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* That, if the Church of *Rome* pretended to no more than this, our dispute with her would be at an end; because then every man would still be privileged, nay, obliged to examine whether the Decisions be agreeable to God's Word or no; and consequently whether the Excommunications upon them be just or unjust. That it was with this temper of mind that the Synod of *Dort* had condemned, not the men whose Persons they never anathematiz'd at all, but their Errors, by demonstrating they were contrary to express Texts of Scripture. That for his own part, he lookt upon that as a very just Excommunication, but the reason why he did so, was, that he saw it was founded upon Scripture, and not upon the Authority of the Assembly themselves.

That it was true the Independents had once an extraordinary Assembly in the Year 1653. for the adjusting their Confession of Faith; but however they did commonly disavow the use of Colloquies and Synods; and for this very reason the Synod of *Charenton* condemned them, and not for refusing a blind and absolute Obedience to what the

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the Assemblies should decree in matters of Faith, as by the Act it self is abundantly evident.

For the Synod of *Sainte Ety*, I cannot imagine (said he) why you will needs have it to intend an alteration in the Confession of Faith, I mean as to any essential part of it; for National Synods are not at all impowered to do this, and if that at *Sainte-Ety* had ever attempted it, all the Protestants in the Kingdom would have disclaimed the thing. I own they had power to put illustrations and explanations into an Act and you must own too, that they had the same power to put them into the Confession; and when the same thing is capable of being done different ways, men are free to make choice of that which they esteem the most fitting and convenient. Here *M. de Condom* interrupting Mr. *Claude*, told him, it was certain that Synod had thoughts of couching the Article of the Lord's Supper in ambiguous expressions, and this was the design of the Mediators. That there was mentioned a power to decide all points of Doctrine, which had a manifest relation to the Real Presence, as held by the *Lutherans*. Mr. *Claude* replied, that to tax the Synod with a design of agreeing upon ambiguous expressions, was a mere conjecture of *M. de Condom*, for which he offered not the least proof; and that he for his part guessed the quite contrary; that he did not at all question but the Synod intended to do all that could be done for reducing the *Lutherans* to a full knowledge of the truth; and this was the meaning of that power given them to decide all Doctrinal Points with them, that is, to do it by the Word of God.

Then resuming the method of his Discourse, he made answer to what *M. de Condom* alledged, that it was intolerable Pride for mere single private Persons to fancy themselves wiser and better able to understand Scripture than a whole Ecclesiastical Assembly together. He told him then, that single and private Persons ought by no means to think so highly of themselves, as to fancy they were wiser and better able to understand Scripture than a whole Assembly together. That on the contrary, they should presume favourably of an Assembly, and retain a disposition to be taught by it. But still this was no Argument, that they should not continually have their Eyes open to discern whether an Assembly had really discharged their duty: imitating herein those *Hebrews*, of whom it is said, that they compared what St. Paul Preached with the Scriptures, searching whether those things were so. That we must distinguish between a Judgment of *humility and charity*, which concludes but probably, and a persuasion of *Infallibility*, which concludes necessarily and certainly. That according to the Judgment of Charity and Humility, we must think the

Acts 17.
11.

the best of an Assembly, nay even of a private Doctor ; but in as much as both Assemblies, and private persons, are liable to mistakes, a man must not carry on this Judgment of Charity and Humility so far as that he should suffer himself to be blinded by it ; and when an Assembly or Doctor have really erred, not to see it ; for this would be to stretch things beyond their due bounds. For instance, said he, in the capacity I am in over my Flock, it is mens duty to presume favourably of me, that I understand the meaning of Scripture better than plain private Persons ; but for all that, they are by no means bound to think me infallible, nor fancy it impossible I should ever be mistaken in a point of Doctrine ; and in such a case a plain private Person is priviledged to think he could understand the Scripture better than I. Private Doctors, says *M de Condom*, are not at all concerned in our Dispute, all the World knows private Doctors may err, and consequently they can have no title to an absolute obedience. The Controversie is concerning the whole Body of an Ecclesiastical Assembly, and I expect from you a clear distinct answer to this particular ; whether you believe single private men can understand the meaning of Scripture better than the whole Body of the Church convened in a Council.

Mr. *Claude* replied, That he only mentioned private Doctors as an Argument that Christian Humility should not be abused, nor made a pretence for men to deny themselves the benefit of their own Eyes, that so they might avoid Pride and Presumption. For, if by *M. de Condom's* own Confession, private Doctors have no right to an absolute Obedience, it is neither a proud, nor presumptuous Imagination, that it may possibly happen, we should understand Scripture sometimes better than they ; tho for the main we are bound to presume in favour of them, and that in probability it will be otherwise. The case is the same with Assemblies ; for even these, being not Infallible, ought not to challenge an absolute Submission, and such as God alone hath a just right to. That no less a Person than *St. Paul* hath declared, *That he had no Dominion over the Corinthians Faith.*

M. de Condom said, that quotation was impertinent, and desired to know of Mr. *Claude*, whether he was not of opinion, that an absolute obedience was due to *St. Paul*. The absolute obedience (replied Mr. *Claude*) which was due to *St. Paul*, was so to his Divine Doctrines, and not his person. No more, said *M de Condom*, do we pretend, that men ought to pay this obedience to the persons of men whereof the Councils consist, but to the Holy Ghost, by which they are guided, according to that profession of the Council at *Jerusalem*, *It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost, and to us.* When the Holy Ghost appears in the determinations

2 Cor. I.
24.

Acts 15.

terminations of Councils, as he did in *St. Paul's Doctrine*, and that of the *Jerusalem Council*, then said *Mr. Claude*, this Obedience must be paid, never else. And this appearance of the Holy Ghost consisteth in the Councils decisions, being framed according to the Word of God. Still *M. de Condom* urged, that the dispute was not concerning the Word of God, but the true meaning of that Word. That distinction, says *Mr. Claude*, signifies nothing at all, because the true meaning of the Word of God, and the Word it self, are but one and the same thing.

Then *M. de Condom* returned to the business of the *Independents*, and urged, that according to *Mr. Claude's* principle, there was no remedy for the avoiding *Independency*, nor any prevention, that there should not be as many different Religions as Parishes, nay, as many as there be single persons. That the *Independents* did not cast off Assemblies, so far as concerned instruction, only they did not allow them in any Authoritative decisions, and that in this the Pretended Reformed agreed with them. He beat upon this over and over again for a long time together, to all which *Mr. Claude* return'd the same answer he had done before, *viz.* That there was not indeed any humane means of Certainty and Infallibility, which could prevent the exorbitant errors of mens minds; but there was a certain and infallible Divine one, even the Holy Spirit of God, imparted to his True Believers; That Synods and other Assemblies, were means of mighty use, and very proper for this purpose, and the *Independents* condemnation was for rejecting these last, and not for refusing to Assemblies a full and Absoute Power of determining matters in Controversy. That although the *Protestants* did not allow such Assemblies a supreme and unbounded Authority, yet they did allow them as much, as the Ministers and Dispensers of God's Word are capable of.

At this rate, said *M. de Condom* then, we shall never have done disputing. I ask you therefore once more, *Sir*, whether you believe that single and private persons can understand the meaning of God's Word, better than the whole Church convened in Council? *Mr. Claude* told him, he had answered that Question already, to wit, that it does not usually fall out so; and that further, 'tis our duty to hope the best of an Ecclesiastical Assembly; but still it might come to pass, that through the prevalency of mens passions, and worldly Interests, the decisions of such Assemblies might be contrary to Truth. You must not run back thus to Interests and Passions, said *M. de Condom*, but answer my question in one word, by saying either Yes, or No. Mens Passions, and worldly Interests, said *Mr. Claude*, are premised here with a great
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deal of Reason, because these are the main things that occasion erroneous determinations; but since you are not willing to hear of them, my answer must be with this distinction, That God does not suffer it commonly so to be, but absolutely speaking, it is possible it should be so. *M. de Condom* said, that was as much as he desired, and that it was the most absurd thing in the World, to believe it so much as possible, for a single Man, and a private person, to understand the meaning of Scripture better than the whole Church met together in Council.

Mr. *Claude* replied, that he was amazed to hear *M. de Condom* cry out upon That as such a mighty absurdity, which resulted merely from the freedom used by God in dispensing his Grace. That supposing the Controversy to concern such means of knowledge as are purely humane, it would indeed be absurd to say, that a single and private person should be wiser than a whole Assembly, and that this would be then a principle of pride and presumption. But the matter now treated of is, the illumination of the Holy Spirit, which *bloweth where it listeth*, and God can give it to a private single person, and yet not give it to a whole Assembly. That of this there was an eminent instance in our Saviours time, as he himself said, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, for that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* That the whole Jewish Church had in their Assemblies declared Jesus Christ a Deceiver. That nevertheless this was not only a Church, but the one sole Church in the World at that time, invested with the Authority of God, who had founded, nourished, and brought it up till that time. That God had taught it by his Prophets, and deposited his Holy Oracles there. That this Church laid a just claim to a succession of Two thousand years continuance, and valued her self upon it. That she held formal solemn Assemblies, and such as Jesus Christ himself acknowledged. *They sit*, says he, *in Moses seat, All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.* And yet this very Church determin'd the greatest and most heinous Error that ever could be in the World, even that Jesus Christ was to be rejected as a wicked man and a Deceiver. That we cannot avoid affirming, that at that time single and private persons might understand the Scripture better than the whole Body of the Church met together; and that in allowing *M. de Condom's* Principle to be true, *viz.* That men ought to yield an absolute obedience to the decisions of Ecclesiastical Assemblies, without taking upon them a right to examine what is so decided; we do condemn Jesus Christ, and as many as then believed in him. For according to this principle, Jesus Christ

Joh. 3. 8.

Matt. 11.
25.

Matt. 23.
2, 3.

Christ ought not any more to have taught the people publicly, after the Church had past such decisions against him, nor ought the people to have given him their attention any more, because they were not suffered to examine those decisions. And yet, proceeded he, Jesus Christ did not forbear Preaching to the people, and converting many of them; nor did they withdraw their attention, notwithstanding all the decisions given against him. This principle then of a blind and implicit obedience, is consequently false, and contrary to the conduct of Jesus Christ and his Disciples.

To preclude this Argument, by urging that Jesus Christ wrought such miracles as did evidence his Authority to be Divine, is here of no significancy at all. For there are two sorts of Miracles, the one true, the other false; the one, that *men may believe a lye*, the other to convince them of the truth. This distinction was made by God himself in the 13th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, where he tells the *Israelites*, That if a Prophet give them a sign or a wonder, and would persuade them to go after other Gods, They must not hearken unto him, for the Lord their God proveth them. Jesus Christ also hath himself owned the truth of this distinction. Now, said he, if *M. de Condom's* principle had taken place, the people had nothing to do to make this distinction, after once the Church had determined that Jesus Christ wrought his Miracles by the help of *Beelzebub*, and not by the Power of God. They must not any more, according to *M. de Condom*, so much as open their eyes to see these Miracles, or suffer the least impresson to be made upon themselves by them. And by consequence this principle is false, and destructive of the Christian Religion.

Hereupon *M. de Condom* interrupted Mr. *Claude*, telling him, that this Instance of the Jewish Church ought not to have been produced in the present case. For, said he, the Synagogue was to fall, thus the Prophets had foretold, and therefore the people ought not then to pay such an obedience to their Guides, as is now owing to the Church of Christ, which must never fail: To which Mr. *Claude* return'd, That seeing the Synagogue was to fall, it might consequently so fall out, that single and private persons should understand the meaning of Scripture better than the whole body of a Church met together in its solemn Assemblies, which was the very point in debate; and from hence it follows clearly, that it was neither pride, nor presumption, for private people, either to believe it possible for them at some time to understand Scripture better than the whole Body of an Assembly; nor upon this principle to take their decisions into examination. And that this was all he desired.

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Besides, said he, This Reason could have no manner of influence upon the *Jews*, because the Synagogue were not only not agreed upon it, but quite contrary, asserting that it should never fail, they produced in their own behalf several promises, which, at first blush, seemed to have a great deal of strength. 'Tis but lost labour to urge in defence of this, the Prophets who foretold its fall; for the meaning of those Prophecies was the thing then in question, and the Synagogue having explained these in a sense that made for them, according to *M. de Condom's* principle, it was the people's duty to stick close to that explanation, without examining it at all. In a word (said he) this fall of the Synagogue, does not make their Assemblies differ at all from those of the Christian Church, with relation to the matter now in dispute between us. For what Promises soever the Church of Jesus Christ may have, that she shall subsist for ever, there is not any thing in Scripture gives us assurance, that the Assemblies of Councils shall never fail.

Here *M. de Condom* took up the Discourse, and said, That Mr. *Claude's* Argument concerning the time of the Synagogues fall, was the most impertinent thing in the World. For at that time it could not be said that there was any visible Authority upon Earth, to which men were necessarily obliged to submit; because Jesus Christ himself was there, that is, the very Truth appearing visibly among men, to whom God had given testimony from Heaven, and who wrought Miracles. Do but you, proceeded he, bring again Jesus Christ Teaching, Preaching, doing Miracles among us, and we shall have no further occasion for the Churches Authority. My Argument, said Mr. *Claude*, was not only the most pertinent to our present purpose, but the clearest and most concluding Argument in the World; and I hope you your self will grant it to be so, after I have entreated you to consider, that the visible Authority of the Son of God was the very point in dispute between the Synagogue and Jesus Christ, and that this very point the Synagogue had determined in the negative; That the main business was to know, whether Jesus Christ were a Deceiver or not, whether his Miracles proceeded from God or Beelzebub. That Jesus Christ's visible Authority could not decide that question in the peoples minds; for no Authority can decide a doubt till it be first received; and Jesus Christ's Authority was not as yet received, for the main controversy then depending, was, whether it should be received, or rejected: So that there remained only the Authority of the Church, and this had determined against him. According then to *M. de Condom's* Principles, private persons ought consequently to have stuck to that,
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and rejected Jesus Christ. *M. de Condom* called this Argument of Mr. *Claude's* a Jewish Argument. Mr. *Claude* returned, that this ought not to be called a Jewish Argument, because it concluded in favour of Christianity; but the contrary principle rather deserved this name, because it favoured the Cause and proceedings of the Jews.

Afterwards Mr. *Claude* said, That if he would have recourse to History, it will be no difficult matter to demonstrate, that many Councils have fallen into Error, and been mistaken in their Determinations. Particularly among others, the Council of *Arimini*, which condemned the Consubstantiality of the Son, that is, his Eternal Divinity. *M. de Condom* cried out, Whether are you carrying us now, Sir? To the Council of *Arimini*? When shall we have done, if all those Histories must be discusst? Do not you know that the Council of *Arimini* was a forced, packt Assembly? You urge my very argument for me, said Mr. *Claude*, which is, that a General Council may be packt. Here is an instance of one, consisting of four hundred Bishops that was so. *M. de Condom* answered, That those Bishops were compelled by the Emperors Authority, who had sent Soldiers among them; but afterwards, when they were every one returned home, they disclaimed what had been done, and exprest their remorse for it. Mr. *Claude* replied, That many of them, it was true, did acknowledg they had done amiss; but that very acknowledgment of, and repentance for a Fault, which *M. de Condom* affirms they shewed, is a Confirmation of their committing it; and 'tis of no great moment to know, upon what motives they committed it, since it is plain, that it was really committed. And further, every particular man's returning from his Error, is a plain Indication, that each of them thought himself under no Obligation of acquiescing in what had been determined, when they were all met together in Council.

M. de Condom cried out, That there was no necessity of meddling with all these Historical Points, and that it would divert them too much from the main business. There is, says he, an easier way of deciding the matter. The Subject of our Controversy, is the first Principle of Faith in particular Persons. This in your Opinion is the Holy Scripture; in ours, the Churches Authority. Put the case in a young Child, who hath been baptized, but hath not yet read the Scripture; I would know by what Principle this Child believes the Scripture to be Divine; particularly the Book of *Canticles* for instance, which hath not a word of God in it. Now this Child who is a Christian, who hath

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hath received the Holy Ghost, and Faith conveyed into him by Baptism, and who is a member of the Church, does either doubt of the Scriptures Divine Authority, or he does not; If he does not doubt, then he believes it Divine upon the Churches Authority, which is the first Authority he lives under. If he does doubt, then a man may be a Christian, and yet doubt whether the Scripture be true.

Mr. *Claude* returned, That he could say something to that supposal of *M. de Condom*, That every baptized Child receives the Holy Ghost; but was unwilling to stay upon a thing by the by, or deviate from the main matter in dispute. He would therefore satisfy himself, with making a few Reflections upon what *M. de Condom* urged last. The first said he, is, That the first knowledge of the Catholick Church given by the Holy Spirit to this Child, is in all probability given by his Creed, where he finds *I believe the Holy Catholick Church*. And yet in the Creed, that Article is placed after several other Articles of Doctrine. For it begins with *God the Father Almighty*, goes on with the *Son Jesus Christ*, and the *Holy Ghost*, and after these comes in the *Catholick Church*. Now this is a manifest proof, that the belief of Doctrines is not wholly derived from the Churches Authority, for else the Creed ought to be put together after another method, and the first thing said, should be, *I believe the Catholick Church*, and by the *Catholick Church*, *I believe in God the Father*, and so on.

My second Reflection, said he, is, That you ought not to take it for granted, as you do, that the first Authority a Child begins to live under, is that of the Catholick Church. It being manifest, That the first Authority a Child lives under, is his Father or Mother, or if you please his Nurser; and that the Churches cannot take place till afterwards, but does in some measure depend upon the other. The Consequence whereof is, That the first Authority, which is the Paternal, can as well lead the Child to Scripture, as it can to the Church.

Then, Thirdly, said he, It is the easiest thing in the World to retort your own Argument back upon your self, thus; The baptized Child either doubts of the Churches Authority, or he does not; if he does not, then he believes it upon the Authority of Scripture, for there is no other way for him to believe it with a Divine Faith: And consequently, it is not the Church that induces men to believe Scripture, but Scripture that induces the belief of the Church, which is
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the thing we contend for. If he does doubt, then there is a Christian that hath received the Holy Spirit, and Faith conveyed to him by Baptism, and is a Member of the Church, and yet is in a state of doubt which is that first Authority whereupon all the rest of his Faith depends. Now that the Child cannot with a Divine Faith believe the Churches Authority any other way, but by the Authority of Scripture, I prove thus. If it be not by Scripture that he believes the Church and its Authority; then 'tis either by way of immediate Inspiration, and Enthusiasm, or by his Fathers, or Mothers, or Nurses Authority, or by Argument taken from the very nature of the Church. This could not be by Enthusiasm, because the Holy Ghost does not proceed in such a method. Nor by his Fathers, or Mothers, or Nurses Authority, for you discern the inconveniences of advancing such kinds of Authority for the first Principle of Faith. Nor can it be by proper Proofs and Arguments taken from the nature of the Church; because as you in your Argument suppose the Child not yet to have read the Scripture; so do I likewise in mine, suppose him not to have considered the nature of the Catholick Church, and to know no more of it, than barely the Name. It remains therefore, that the Child either believes the Catholick Church by the Scripture, which you will not grant; or that he does not believe it at all, but doubts of it; and so you fall into the same inconvenience as to the Church, which you labour to reduce me to, with relation to Scripture.

It may be said very truly, That upon this Pinch a man might discern *M. de Condom's* Wit was not in the condition it used to be, and that his natrual freedom of Argument and Repartee, plainly flagg'd. He put himself upon maintaining that the first Authority the Child lived under, was that of the Church, and not his Fathers or Mothers. *Mr. Claude* returned, That this was a thing too evident to be denied, that the Fathers and Mothers, and those who take the first pains about educating the Child, is the first Authority with respect to Religion, and that he must at first of all learn from them, that there is such a thing as a Catholick Church, into which he must enter himself, or such a thing as the Scripture, which was from God, and to which he must yield Obedience. That being upon enquiry by what mean the Child can come to believe the Catholick Churches Authority, there is a necessity for fixing, either upon Inspiration, or the Paternal Authority, or the Scriptures, which informed him concerning it. *M. de Condom* answered, That the Childs Faith in the Churches Authority

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was a Divine Faith, because it was the Holy Ghost that wrought it in him. Mr. *Claude* replied, That the question was not now concerning the efficient Cause, which produced this Faith in the Child, but concerning the Motive or Argument, by which it was produced. If *M. de Condom's* meaning were, that the Holy Ghost wrought Faith in this Child, without any Argument or Motive at all, this were a sort of Enthusiasm, and the Holy Ghost does not Influence People at that rate. *M. de Condom* said, there were indeed Motives of Credibility. Mr. *Claude* returned hereupon, That if he would allow the Child so much time, as to examine those Motives of Credibility for the Authority of the Church, and perceive their strength, He himself would in like manner allow the same Child time to examine the Motives of Credibility for the Authority of Scripture, and perceive the strength of them; but in this case he must forego his Argument, which proceeds upon a Supposition, that the Child never yet read the Scripture.

But, is not this true, said *M. de Condom*, That in these circumstances the Child either does or does not doubt of the Scriptures being Divine? And is it not as true, said Mr. *Claude*, That in these Circumstances, the Child either does, or does not doubt of the Churches Authority? For if you take the Child before he have read the Scripture, I will look upon him too, before he knows what Motives of Credibility there are for the Churches Authority. It is your part to answer my Argument, and the very same answer you give, will serve me against yours. But do you, as you think fit; I however will not scruple to give a direct answer to your way of reasoning. The Child then may be lookt upon with Distinction, as to three several times; either, before his Father have ever shewed him the Bible, and informed him that this Book came from God, or after his Father have told him thus much, but before he himself have read it; or lastly, after that he hath read the Book himself. As to the first of these times, which is that your Argument looks upon him in, it cannot well be said; that then he either does or does not doubt, for neither the one, nor the other is strictly true, according to your meaning. Not to doubt of any thing, signifies to be well assured of it. Now, before a man can be said, to doubt, or to be well assured that any thing is so, or so; he must first have some knowledg of the thing it self. I can neither doubt nor be assured, that such a Person is King of *Spain*, unless I first have some knowledg of the Person. So that your reasoning is by no means

means good, that a Child either does, or does not doubt of the Scripture's being Divine: For there is a medium between these two, to wit, such as consists in a state called, *An Ignorance of pure negation*. He knows not as yet what the Scripture is, nor hath ever heard talk of it. To doubt, or not doubt whether Scripture be Divine, a Man must have some knowledg, and form some Idea of the thing: But the Child can never form any Idea of a Book he never heard once mentioned. At the second point of time, when his Father hath showed him the *Bible*, and told him, that Book is the Word of God, but the Child hath not yet read it himself; he believes it to be the Word of God, but this he does, not by a Divine, but humane Faith, because his Father hath told him so: And this is the case of a *Catechumen*. At the third point of time, when he is supposed to have read the Book himself, and felt the virtue and efficacy of it, he believes it to be God's Word, but this he does not now by a humane Faith, because his Father told him so, but by a Divine Faith, because he hath found the Divinity and Efficacy of it upon himself; and this is the condition of a Believer.

M. de Condom laid hold of the word *Catechumen*, and said, that this was a Christian, one already Baptized, and actually admitted into Covenant with God. *Mr. Claude* answered, that by the word *Catechumen* he meant nothing else but a Child after Baptism, at the time of his being instructed in the first Rudiments of Religion. *M. de Condom* beat again upon almost the same things that had been said before, constantly affirming it to be the Churches Authority, that the Child received the Scriptures as Divine; and that having received them as such from the Church, he did afterwards receive the meaning and interpretation of them from thence also.

Pray, *Sir*, tell me, said *Mr. Claude* then, when a Child learns at first of all, that there is a Catholick Church, Is it barely a general Idea, which consists in knowing only that there is such a thing as a Catholick Church, without knowing where, or which it is? or does it determine him to that Church whose publick Assemblies he sees? For if it be the former of these, this, as you would make it, is a mighty wild and insignificant principle of Faith. I know that there is a Catholick Church to whose Authority it is my duty to submit, but I cannot tell where that Church is, nor which is she; this would be but an odd principle of Faith. The Child, said *M. de Condom*, does certainly determine this Idea to the particular Church, whose Assemblies he sees, and in which he himself bears a part, and does believe that to be the Catholick Church, and not barely that there is such a Church. Let us imagine then, said *Mr. Claude*, a Child born within a Church that

is Heretical, or Schismatical, the *Aethiopian* Church suppose, the first principle of Faith in this Child will be from the *Aethiopian* Church, looking upon that as the Catholick. From this Church then, and from her Authority, according to your Tenet, he will receive the Scripture as Divine; from her likewise he will receive the meaning and interpretation of Scripture; and he must never afterwards believe himself privileged to examine the determinations of his *Aethiopick* Church, for fear of falling into the inconvenience and absurdity of fancying it impossible for him, a private single person, to understand the true meaning of Scripture better than the whole body of the Church. Tell me now, Sir, whether according to this principle, this Child be not obliged always to abide within that Heretical, or Schismatical Church? Tell me what means you will contrive for him to get out of it? It is evident then, that your principle would serve as well to continue a *Jew* in his Judaism, a Pagan in his Heathenism, and a Heretick in his Heresy, as an Orthodox Christian in the true Church.

To this *M. de Condom* replied, that in the perswasion of that *Aethiopian* Child, we must make a difference between that part which proceeded from the Holy Spirit, and that which is the effect of prejudice and humane prepossession. That the Holy Spirit's dictate was in general, that there was a Catholick Church somewhere or other; but his supposal, that the Church in which he was born was that Catholick Church, proceeded from humane prepossession. It is true, he did from this Church receive the Scriptures, and believed them to be Divine, for no other reason but upon its Authority: But afterwards, as he was reading the Scriptures, the Holy Ghost raised in him some scruples about the Church he was born in, and by this means he came off from the Heresy and Schism he found himself insnared in.

Mr. Claude returned, that *M. de Condom* must of necessity either retract his principle, or confess what he now alledged to be utterly impossible. Because this *Aethiopian* neither can, nor must be allowed to understand the Scriptures any otherwise than in the sense and interpretation of his own Church, by whose Authority it is that he believes them to be Divine, and from whose hands he receives their meaning; so that when he reads Scripture, there can never start up any scruples in his mind against the truth of his own Church, because he never expounds any Text of Scripture, but in agreement with the sense of that Church about it. Now if on the other side your meaning be, that this person expounds Scripture of his own head, and according to his own judgment, so taking it in a sense different from that of the Church, you at the same time make him forego the principle that you have all this while been con-

contending for; and it is not you only that make him forego it, but you do besides maintain, that the Holy Ghost himself makes him forego it, and all those mighty inconveniences you exclaimed against, vanish into nothing. He added moreover, that what *M. de Condom* said last, justified the measures the Protestants had taken in relation to the Church of *Rome*; for altho that had been believed to be the Catholick Church in the time of our Infancy, tho we had received the Scriptures from her, and believed them to be of Divine Authority; yet must we not be blamed for making a difference between that part of this belief which proceeded from the Holy Ghost, and that which was the effect of humane Prepossession and Prejudice: We cannot be found fault with, for having admitted some Scruples against the Truth of this Church, as we read the Scriptures, and for having upon this account withdrawn our selves from her Communion.

M. de Condom said, the Cases did still differ in this circumstance, That the *Ethiopian*, when he left his own, would betake himself to the Catholick Church, whereas the Pretended Reformed have not put themselves into any other Communion at all. You courted indeed *Jeremy's* the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, but he would have nothing to do with you. The separation was not from our selves, said *Mr. Claude*, and that is enough to shew that we have not separated from the true Church. If *Jeremy* the Patriarch of *Constantinople* would have nothing to do with us, as you say, that was to his own loss, and he did not do as he should have done in it.

Upon this the Company rose, and the Conference which lasted some time longer, grew a great deal more confused; several things were then spoken of. *M. de Condom* exaggerated much, and pretended to draw a parallel between the separation of the Protestants and that of the old Hereticks, particularly the *Arrians* and *Macedonians*, that set up new Churches by themselves. *Mr. Claude* compared the Protestants behaviour, to that of Christ's Apostles, when they separated from the *Jews*; that, as the Apostles relied on Scripture against the *Jews*, who relied upon Ecclesiastical Assemblies and their Authority, the Protestants did the same against the Church of *Rome*. He said, the *Arrians* maintained, that the Consubstantiality of the Son of God determined by the *Nicene* Council, was a Novel Doctrine, and that many other persons had in truth express themselves very unadvisedly concerning the Divinity of the Son; among others he instanced in *Origen*, *Justin Martyr*, and the Council of *Antioch*. As for *Origen*, *M. de Condom* said he was a suspected Author, and the Council of *Antioch* said he, was an *Arrian* Council; to which *Mr. Claude* replied,

(d 2)

that

that he was much mistaken ; for that Council was held before *Arrius* his time, and yet rejected the Term *Consubstantial*. As to *Justin Martyr*, How, *Sir*, said he, a Martyr speak amiss of the Divinity of the Son of God ! I will never believe a word on't. You may believe what you think fit, *Sir*, said Mr. *Claude* ; but for all that, the thing is even so.

Afterwards *M. de Condom* put himself upon the Invocation of Saints, and Prayers for the Dead : For the first of these, he told them Mr. *Daille* had allowed it to be Thirteen hundred years old ; and Mr. *Blondell* acknowledged the second to be of great Antiquity. Mr. *Claude* replied, It was no great wonder, if the Church of *Rome*, which had collected, and Canonized the Errors and Superstitions of former Ages, had picked up some that were of a good old standing. But he ought to have said withal, that Mr. *Daille* had made it appear, that for Three hundred years together there was not to be found the least footsteps of Invocation of Saints, and especially, that there was not any manner of ground for it in Scripture. That he acknowledged Prayer for the Dead to be one of the oldest superstitions ; but there was a mighty difference between the practice of the Primitive Christians, and the modern devotions of the *Romish* Church. And after all, it was an Error contrary to the principles of Scripture.

M. de Condom betook himself again to the Comparison between the *Protestants* and Hereticks of old ; inferring from thence, that they and their Church was new and upstart. Mr. *Claude* shewed him, that this prejudice was extremely unjust, and of very pernicious consequence. Unjust, because on one hand it placed the advantage on the strongest side, and those that have most of their party ; whereas the Scripture teaches us quite contrary, That *we must not follow a multitude to do evil* : For the strongest side are continually raxing others with making a new Body, and a new Church. Unjust, secondly, because a false Antiquity may be mistaken for a true, an Antiquity of some Ages standing, which is really no better than a Novelty, for an Antiquity of all Ages of the Church ; which in the business of Religion is the highest injustice imaginable. He added moreover, that this prejudice was of very pernicious consequence ; because at this rate, when once Errors and Superstitions had by insensible degrees crept into Religion, and Custom, or the Schools had given them countenance, there would no possible means be left of exposing or extirpating them : For the maintainers of them will be continually objecting against those that endeavour it, that they set up a new Church, and a new Religion. Thus it was, that the *Pharisees* accused Jesus Christ for an Innovator, upon pretence

Exod. 23.

Matt. 15.

pretence that his Disciples kept not the Traditions of the Elders, which were indeed but Innovations themselves. Thus the *Jews* taxed St. Paul for a *Mover of Sedition among them through the whole world, and being a Ringleader of the Sect of the Nazarenes*, which they lookt upon as a new Sect. Thus all the Apostles were charged by the Heathens, for being disturbers of the publick peace, and bringers up of New things, because they endeavoured to root out the old Errors out of mens hearts, and bring them to the worship of the one only true God, maker of Heaven and Earth.

Acts 21.

M. de Condom replied, That Jesus Christ was not new, that the *Jews* expected the *Messias*; that *John Baptist, Anna the Prophetess, Simeon,* and the wise men had owned him. True, said Mr. Claude, he was not really new, for *he is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*: But he was new to that whole Nation which expected a temporal *Messiah*, and did not see in him any sign of what they expected. He was new in their opinion, in that he condemned the old Traditions. His Church was new to them, because it separated from the Body of the *Jews*, and made a distinct body which they had never seen before. And as for *John Baptist, Anna the Prophetess, Simeon,* and the wise men, what were these single private persons, if compared to the whole body of Priests, Pharisees and Lawyers, and the whole Body of all the *Jews* in general, which never owned him, but lookt for an earthly *Messias*. It is plain then, that this prejudice of Novelty, forbidding men to examine things to the bottom, and not distinguishing between a true and a counterfeit Antiquity, accounting that old which was practised yesterday, and every thing new that is contrary to what was in vogue yesterday, is a very ill and dangerous prejudice. It fortifies *Jews* and Heathens against the Christian Religion, and indeed, was continually made use of by *Celsus*, and the rest of them that opposed Christianity.

Heb. 138.

I own, said M. de Condom, that the Heathens did upbraid the Christians with their Novelty, but the Christians demonstrated to them, that the *Jews* always believed in the same God they worshipped, and did expect the same *Messias* they profest. What you say, answer'd Mr. Claude, is a further confirmation of my opinion; to wit, that you ought not out of prejudice conclude for what appears to be new, but search things thoroughly, to know certainly whether what appears to be new, be so in truth. The Heathens accusation proceeded from your prejudice, and the Christians defence of themselves is according to my principle. For it was by an exact examination of things, that the Christians demonstrated they were not new, tho the World looked upon them so, and that what they opposed in the Heathen superstitions, was really new, tho taken to be old.

The

A Relation of the Conference &c.

The Conference having lasted a very great while, near upon five hours, and being carried on with abundance of earnestness in the disputants on both sides, and of attention from the standers by, the Company now began to interpose, and so the dispute broke off. After which Mr. *Claude* applied himself to *M. de Condom*, with a great deal of civility and respect, and intreated him, that the difference between their Religions and Opinions, might not incline him to think less kindly of him. That he for his part should ever retain a very high value and esteem for so deserving a person. *M. de Condom* returned him this very obliging answer, That he had some knowledg of him before by his Writings, but was exceeding glad to know his person now by this Conference, in the management whereof, he had done all that could possibly be done for the vindication of his Cause; and that whenever any opportunity of serving him offered it self, he would very willingly and heartily lay hold on it.

Presently after *M. de Condom* went away; and Mr. *Claude* having first returned thanks to the Company, particularly to the Lady *Mareschalles de Lorge*, for their patience and attention, took his leave of *Mademoiselle de Duras* in words to this purpose, That he had vindicated the Truth before her; and all that was now left for him to do, was only to beseech Almighty God in her behalf; and to exhort her, that she would improve what she had now heard, to the settling her more firmly in that Religion which God had called her to, and not suffer her self to be shaken by any temptation: And these things he would not fail to request of God for her. *Mademoiselle de Duras* thank'd him very kindly for the trouble he had been at, and very passionately begged his Prayers: Which Mr. *Claude* having promised, presently withdrew.

T H E E N D.

E R R A T A.

IN the Preface, Pag. xi. for *Palmenia*, read *Palmeria*; p. xviii. l. 1. f. *were*, r. *wave*. In the Answer, p. 2. l. 3. f. *your*, r. *our*; p. 7. in the Marg. r. *Ephes.* 1. 22, 23. p. 8. l. 18. f. *rose*, r. *goes*; p. 10. l. 14. f. *Good*, r. *Goods*; p. 23. l. 17. f. *in*, r. *on*; p. 24. l. 10. after *she*, r. *is*; p. 31. l. 23. f. *knows*, r. *follows*; p. 32. l. 1. f. *as*, r. *is*; p. 35. l. 13. dele *That*; p. 42. l. 2. after *for*, r. *us*; *ibid.* l. 3. for *this*, r. *his*; p. 60. l. 20. dele *If*; p. 67. l. 1. f. *frequent*, r. *freely*.

THE
SECOND PART
OF

Mr. *CLAUDE*'s

ANSWER

TO

Monsieur *de MEAUX*'s BOOK,

INTITLED,

A Conference with Mr. *CLAUDE*, &c.

CONTAINING

An Examination of *M. de Meaux*'s Thirteen
Reflections on a Writing of Mr. *Claude*'s.

L O N D O N:

Printed for *T. Dring*, at the *Harrow* in *Fleetstreet*,
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ADVERTISEMENT:

NOW in the Press, and will in few days be published, *An Account of the Life and Death of the Author, Mr. Claude, Minister of Charenton in France.*

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ERRATA.

Page 5. l. 24. read *it is*; p. 14. l. 4. r. *strong*; *ibid.* l. ult. after *believing*, r. *them*; p. 26. l. 19. and 22. r. *Is it*; p. 33. l. 31. after *nothing*, r. *new*; p. 47. l. 32. r. *being by nature a man*; p. 48. l. 17. aft. *admitted*, r. *to*; p. 50. l. 7. aft. *not*, r. *to*; *ibid.* l. 28. r. *ruine*; p. 55. l. 27. and in the Margin, r. *Arcudius*; p. 59. l. 6 r. *it*; p. 62. l. 16. r. *Child*; p. 63. l. 33. dele *This*; p. 66. l. 24. r. *Thus*; p. 75. l. 36. aft. *Page*, insert 28. p. 83. l. 15. r. *on the sudden*; p. 89. l. 8. r. *Altercations*; p. 93. in Marg. 2d Quotation, l. ult. r. *impis*; so likewise p. 94. l. 5; p. 94. in Marg. r. *de sorte*; *ibid.* r. *proposent*; *ibid.* r. *Reponse*; p. 96. Quot. l. 1. and 9. r. *externo*; *ibid.* l. 6. r. *vraye*; l. 7. r. *ave*; p. 104. l. 34. r. *be*; l. penult. r. *Laws*; l. ult. r. *force*; p. 112. l. 22. r. *Writings*; p. 124. l. 32. dele *of*; l. 38. dele *and*; p. 126. l. 26. r. *on their*; p. 131. l. 32. r. *quite*; p. 132. l. 31. r. *fix upon*; p. 136. l. 28. r. *be*; l. 30. r. *be*; p. 139. in marg. r. *paille*; p. 144. l. penult. r. *Is this*; p. 155. l. 35. r. *make*; p. 165. in the Quotat. r. *periculosius*, r. *comestationes*; p. 170. l. ult. r. *spurcitiis*.

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TO THE READER.

HAVING already in an *Advertisement* before the *First Part*, endeavoured to obviate such *Scruples* as might seem with any appearance of *Reason* to be raised against this *Translation*, I hope there will be no occasion so far to distrust either the *Reader's Ingenuity*, or the *Satisfactoriness* of what was there offered, as to enlarge any further in my own and the *Book's* vindication.

I confess it was once in my thoughts, from some passages in *Mr. Claude* concerning the *Right of the Ministry* inherent in the *Faithful*, and the first *Pastors* of the *Reformation*, to say somewhat that might shew the *advantageous* and *unexceptionable* methods made use of by the *Church of England*, in her *Separation* from the *Romish Communion*; And I imagined I had drawn a sort of obligation upon my self to do so, by asserting in my former *Advertisement*, That As many as understand the difference between us and the *Reformed Protestants* in *France*, are sensible we stand upon the better ground by much, for an engagement against the *Church of Rome*.

But besides, that the prosecution of such a *Design* would have swelled this *Treatise* to an inconvenient bigness, which is already of a bulk beyond what I expected, by reason of the multitude and length of *Quotations*; besides, that this hath been done by better hands so fully and so frequently as might satisfy all that are not resolved never to be satisfied with any thing; I found the trouble happily superseded by what *Mr. Claude* himself hath done in the business, when he undertakes to examine *M. de Meaux's Thirteenth Reflection*. Where in answer to his fourth *Objection*, Whence came their *Pastors*, &c? He transcribes what he had formerly written to this purpose, in his *Defence of the Reformation*. Which Book, whoever shall take the pains to consult, will find, that the passage considered whole and entire, amounts to thus much, That, if some places chose (as 'tis acknowledged they did chuse) *Pastors* of their own heads, yet the necessity of the

Vid. *De-
fense de la
Reform.
Part. 4.
Ch. 1.*

To the Reader.

the times forcing them to the use of such an Expedient, and the general Approbation these Persons so elected met with, as also Gods blessing upon their endeavours, make abundant recompence for what can be thought irregular in such proceedings: But withal, that this Imputation of Irregularity cannot affect the whole Body, no, nor the most considerable part of the Reformers, because in most Countreies the Clergy themselves were exceeding sensible, how necessary a Reformation was, and laboured with a Zeal proportionable to that Sense, in the promoting it. Hereupon, several places, in the head of which England and Scotland are reckoned particularly, reformed with the Consent and Concurrence of the majority of their then Clergy. And from thence to this day, they do retain a continued ordinary Succession of Ministers, without Interruption, Innovation, or any recourse to an extraordinary Call or Constitution. All the inference I make from this at present, is only to observe, how little credit that Fable of the Nags-head-Consecration hath found abroad, and what an unparallel'd confidence those men are endued with, who still endeavour to obtrude upon us a Fiction of their own, in despite of common Sense, publick Records, and all the most authentick Evidence that any thing of that nature can possibly be capable of.

The Quotations in this Second Part, have cost me a great deal of Pains to search and transcribe, which I hope will be granted to have been done faithfully: and where any are wanting, it is either, because the Books referred to, could not be met with, or where there was no danger of Falsification, as when Mr. Claude quotes his own Writings. The reason why I mention this, is thereby to bespeak the Readers Equity and Candor, that in consideration of so much care, he will rather impute such Errors as shall occur in the Translation it self, to Ignorance and want of Judgment, than to any Insincerity, or a design of imposing upon the World.

THE

I

M. de MEAUX's
REFLECTIONS
Relating to the
CONFERENCE,
EXAMINED.

*The first Reflection, concerning the Submission we promise to the
decisions of our National Synods, Examined.*

HAVING already spoken sufficiently to M. de Meaux his Reflections upon my Answer to his Discourse; The next thing in order, is, That we proceed to those which have a Relation to the Conference between us. The subject of the first is, That Submission and Obedience which we promise to our National Synods, as it occurs in our Discipline, in these words; † *We promise in the presence of God to submit our selves to whatever shall be concluded and resolved upon in your holy Assembly, being persuaded, as we verily are, that God will preside in it, and lead you by his holy Spirit into all truth and equity, by the Rule of his Word, for the Good and Edification of his Church, and to his own great Glory.*

† These words are the form of a missive Letter composed in the Synod of Vitre, for the Provinces to follow, when they send Deputies to a National Synod.

Nous promettrons devant Dieu de nous soumettre à tout ce qui sera conclu, & resolu en votre sainte Assemblée, y obéir, et l'exécuter de nostre pouvoir, persuadez que nous sommes que Dieu y presidera, et vous conduira par son Saint Esprit, en toute verité, et equité, par la regle de sa parole, pour le bien et l'edification de son Eglise, et à sa grande gloire. Discipline. Chap. 9. Observ. pag. 144. Huiffeau Edit. Genev. 1666.

2
M. de Meaux's *Reflections examin'd.*

This Act M. de Meaux made use of in the Conference between us, and inferred from it, that an absolute Obedience was a thing so mighty necessary in the Church, that even we our selves, contrary to our own principle, were constrained to acknowledg, and advance it in practice. The answer made to that was, That this promise could not be lookt upon as any other than a conditional one, that is, it supposed the Synod should do its duty, and in matters of Faith, judge and determine according to the Word of God. But this Prelate not relishing that explanation very well, hath thought fit to touch upon this matter again, and endeavour to perswade us these two things: One, that in sight of all we can say to the business, and how loth soever we may be to have it so, our submission in truth is absolute, and unconditional, without restraint or reserve. The other, that if we understand any limitation or condition in it, our Oath is no better than a ridiculous illusion, an equivocation, and such a mental reservation as is unbecoming any honest men.

The first of these he grounds upon six Observations: 1. That there was some opposition made in the Provinces, before they could settle this Submission. 2. That a National Synod at *Tonneins* enjoyned this Submission to be promised in proper terms, without any Condition or Modification. 3. That the Discipline calls the judgment of these Synods, even in doctrinal points, *the last and final resolution*, in which, if men refuse to acquiesce, it appoints, *that they shall be cut off from the Church*. 4. That the like submission is not promised among us, neither to the judgment of Consistories, nor Colloquies, nor even of Provincial Synods. 5. That the National Synod of *Roche* declared this clause of Submission to be necessary to the validity of the Assemblies Conclusions. 6. Lastly, That a bare humane presumption, such as we profess to have of a National Synods integrity, cannot be *the matter and foundation of an Oath*. From all which he infers, that our submission is absolute, and that it is very impertinent in us to go about to understand it with conditions and exceptions, and to reserve to our selves still a right of examining things afterwards.

But all this is of no moment at all: For, as for the first of these Remarks, M. de Meaux magnifies things a great deal more than he ought to do. The truth of it is, there was in the Provinces not any opposition, as he terms it, but some of them were negligent, and did not insert that Clause of Submission in their Letters of Deputation, and others varied in their manner of expressing it. This put the Synod of *Vine*, held in the year 1617. upon composing the form which we have related here, to be constantly and unanimously observed throughout all the Provinces. Here is nothing in all this, but what is very natural, and

and very usual, nothing that favours of quarrel or opposition, nothing that M. de Meaux can make the least advantage of.

As to the second; when the National Synod of *Tonneins* appointed this Submission and Obedience to be promised in proper terms, without any condition or modification; this was not in such a manner as M. de Meaux fancies, with a design to exclude that condition of judging agreeably to the Word of God, but it was intended for provision against the two inconveniencies I mentioned just now; The neglect some Provinces were guilty of, in omitting this clause of submission, and a sort of fantastical diversity in others, some of which instanced in those conditions and modifications, and others took no notice at all of them. This forced the Synod to appoint on one hand, that the submission should be promised in proper and express terms, with regard to the former inconvenience; and on the other hand, that they should not mention in particular, either Condition, or Modification, in relation to the second. But, as for that Condition of following the Word of God in decisions that concern matters of Faith; this is so naturally understood, and, according to the constant Tenet of *Protestants*, is so essentially annexed to every promise of submission, that there was not any necessity of expressing it.

The third observation hath as little of weight and solidity in it as the two former: For 'tis very true, that in the order of Discipline, the determination of a National Synod is the last and final resolution, and that there is not beyond that any humane remedy that can be made use of, for the reducing persons that we think have gone astray; so that it is no wonder sentence should be given against them as obstinate Hereticks, and that they should be excommunicated. But as I said in the Conference, the Excommunication is just; only upon supposal, that that determination was according to the Word of God; and if that supposition be not true, the Excommunication rebounds back upon the Excommunicators themselves: So that when a point of Doctrine is in question, we must not imagine the Synod Excommunicates gainfayers, purely upon this account, that they did not submit their Consciences to their Authority, This is the way that the Church of *Rome* takes; but it excommunicates them for their hardning their hearts against the Word of God, which hath been abundantly demonstrated, and made sufficiently clear to them, by all the humane means that can in reason be made use of for that purpose. And to conclude from thence, that our submission to a National Synod is absolute, and unconditional, without distinction, and without exception, is false Arguing, and an abuse of Reasoning.

I come now to the fourth Observation, which is, that we do not promise the like submission to Consistories, nor Colloquies, nor Provincial Synods that we do to National Synods. From whence *M. de Meaux* will have it to follow, that our submission does not respect the Word of God merely, and considered as such, but the Authority of this supreme Assembly; for as much as other inferiour Assembleis are no less obliged to give their judgment according to that Word of God, than a National Synod. I answer, That although, absolutely speaking, an equal submission be due to the Word of God, where, and however it be manifested to us, whether in the debates of a Consistory, or those of other Assemblies; yet this is no argument, that we ought not engage our selves more strongly to submit to the decisions of a National Synod than other meetings. The reason whereof is, that we may with more probability presume, the decisions of a National Synod will keep close to the Word of God, and the Rules of Truth, than we can presume it of the decisions made by other Assemblies. We may reasonably suppose, that there will be more understanding, and more impartiality in a Company of men chosen of all the Provinces of a large Kingdom, than in a Consistory, a Colloquy, or Provincial Synod; and upon this supposition, we may very justly make some difference between them. Besides, there is no question to be made, but it is a more heinous offence in the sight of God, for a man to carry on his obstinacy against his Word, as far as this higher Assembly, which in all probability propounds it without any humane prepossession, or personal prejudice, than when he hath only slighted it from the mouth of a less and inferiour Assembly, against whom there might objections be found with a great deal more ease. The word, considered in it self, is continually the same, and hath the same Authority always, and every where, without receiving any addition, or diminution at all to it, but in proportion as it becomes more or less cognoscible, according to the different means and instruments whereby it is propounded. We may very well be allowed to affirm that in respect of us, it discovers that Authority more or less; and upon This it is, that the difference we put between the several sorts of Assemblies is grounded. The case is in a manner the same with regard to this Authority, as it is with the King's, which, tho it be the supreme in the Commonwealth, and consequently cannot in it self be made either less or greater, yet does for all that appear to the World, and discover it self in a more full and valid way, by Letters Patents, and publick Edicts, than by Privy Seals, and the determinations of inferiour Courts of Judicature. But still, as we do not pretend that our obedience is due to the Wax, or the Seal barely, but to the King's Authority,

city, which that Seal and Wax signify to us, in the most publick and authoritative way; so neither do we own our submission ought to be paid merely to the Authority of a National Synod, nor is it That we yield obedience to, but the Word of God, which that Synod hath made more clear and evident to us.

The Church of *Rome* hath very near the same opinion of Provincial Councils, that we have of National Synods, that it does not look upon them to be Infallible: And yet there is no question, they think there is a great deal of difference to be made between their decisions, and those of a single Bishop. *M. de Meaux*, for instance, will not own that people ought to pay the same deference to what he himself hath spoken, or written concerning matters of Faith, as they ought to what the Clergy of *France* in Convocation shall determine upon the same Subject. And whence pray arises this difference? Is not every particular Bishop under an obligation to judg agreeably to the Faith of the Catholick Church, every whit as much as Provincial Councils are? And is not, according to his own principles, the same absolute obedience to the Tenets of the Catholick Church required, wheresoever they be met with, whether they come to men from the mouth of one Bishop, or whether from a Provincial Council? What then is the ground of this difference? *M. de Meaux* can give no other account of it than this, That although a Provincial Council be not infallible, yet, for as much as it is more reasonable to presume in favour of it, that it will not deviate from what the Catholick Church holds, than there is to presume thus much of any one single Bishop, upon this account men ought to pay a greater deference to the Council than to the Bishop. And this in agreement with what *Clement* the Fifth defined in the Council of *Vienna*, the substance of which is, || That the Authority of a Provincial Council is greater than that of every particular Prelate in the Province; and the sentence is more full, when confirmed by the opinion of a great many. Now, change but the terms, and this is exactly the Answer that I make to him.

|| Cum
majus sit
provincia-
le Conci-
lium,
quam sin-
gularis

Prælati Provinciæ, ac judicium integrum, quod plurimorum sententiis comprobatur. Vid. *Clementin.* de sent. Excomm. Tit. 10. Lib. 5.

As for the Fifth Observation, 'tis very true, that a Synod of *Rochell* declared that Clause of approving and submitting to what should be decreed and resolved upon, was necessary to the validity of the Assemblies Conclusions. But what is there in this that can disgust *M. de Meaux*? What, that is not grounded upon the evidence of Reason? Or, what does

English.
Reflect.
pag 61.

does he pretend to infer from hence? *It is enough*, says he, *to render the Acts of any Assembly valid, that the persons of whom it is composed, have a power of bringing to it the suffrages of those that send them.* He is mistaken. This is sufficient to make each man's suffrages valid, that is, to give every Deputy a right of delivering his opinion in that Assembly; but this is not sufficient to make their publick debates in common valid; that requires a promise of approving and submitting to the deliberations themselves. However, the Synod does not declare an absolute submission to be necessary for that purpose, in that sense this Prelate understands it. The Act implies no such thing as that is.

English.
Reflect.
Pag. 60.

Lastly, *M. de Meaux's* Sixth Remark, That a bare humane presumption cannot be the matter and foundation of an Oath, (as he expresses it) is to me the most surprising thing in the World to come from a Prelate of the Church of Rome. In that Church, present, real and effectual Acts are passed every day, and in matters of the highest consequence, upon bare humane presumptions; such as they can have but a moral certainty of at most, or to speak more truly, such as amount to no more than charitable conjectures; upon This they absolve Penitents, upon this they worship the Eucharist, upon this they pray to Canonized Saints, upon this they think their Marriages good and lawful, upon this they receive the Sacraments, upon this they obey a Bishop and a Pope, upon this a Pope and a Bishop enjoy their Benefice with a safe Conscience, and with a safe Conscience discharge all the functions belonging to their Office; and yet *M. de Meaux* after all will tell us, that we cannot upon the very same thing, that is, upon a very strong presumption ground an Oath, which ought not to be put in execution till the presumption is changed into an absolute certainty; nor make a conditional promise, which is of no efficacy at all, till the condition be fulfilled. What shall we call this, if it be not to observe a mote in his Brothers eye, and never perceive the beam in his own eye?

M. de Meaux may please to distinguish betwixt Assertory Oaths, which respect a thing already past, as the subject of our Affirmation or Negation; and promissory Oaths, which concern things to come, and we engage our selves to the performance of. The former of these, I own, cannot be grounded on a bare humane presumption. There is a greater degree of certainty, and a stronger perswasion required, to make a man's Oath lawful, That such a matter or fact was true or false. But all the World knows, that upon the second kind, men swear dayly with a very safe Conscience, in Civil Societies, upon bare presumptions. Upon this ground, a Friend swears an everlasting friendship with the Man he takes to be his Friend; upon this Officers in the Army swear obedi-

obedience and fidelity to their General; upon this a Woman swears to acknowledg from that time forward such a particular Man for her lawful Husband; and upon this very ground are all the alliances of Princes contracted, and all the mutual promises they make to one another, and confirm by Oaths. It is evident, that if the World should follow *M. de Meaux's* Rule in this particular, almost all Oaths of this kind must be utterly banisht, there being very few of them, that proceed upon more than bare presumptions.

But why then, says he, is not this great Oath pronounced in these Terms? *We swear before God to submit to all that you shall decide, if you decide by his Word, as we hope, and presume ye will.* *M. de Meaux* here, makes a stumbling block to himself, where there is really none. Is it possible, that he should not have considered, that there is nothing in the World more common, than to meet with propositions express'd in absolute and general terms, which yet do include some tacit conditions, distinctions, and limitations, whether it be, that the nature of the thing discover them, or that they arise from some other Cause? For instance, God hath said absolutely, *Thou shalt not kill*, and yet we understand here, except thou be a Magistrate, or that thou kill in a just War. God hath said absolutely, *Thou shalt do no manner of work on the Sabbath day*, and yet Jesus Christ hath found out such exceptions to be included here as concern such works as Charity directs, or Necessity advises to. There is not any duty in Scripture fixed more firmly than obedience to Parents; The Law hath said, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*; and *St. Paul*, *Children obey your Parents in all things*; nay, *Moses* adjudged rebellious and disobedient Children to death. Yet ought we not from hence to conclude this obedience so absolute, but that it admits of many exceptions; we must not imagine that it supposes every Father to be Infallible, or forbids Children to make any manner of enquiry, of what nature the things commanded are. For if a Father should bid his Son rise up against his King, or Sacrifice to false Gods, or slander his Neighbour, or take away another Man's Goods unjustly, Can there be any question, that the Child ought to act contrary to these commands, let the terms of the Law enjoying this obedience be never so absolute? The same thing must be said of Servants obedience, which the Scripture commands in absolute terms; *Servants*, says the Apostle, *obey your Masters*; and in another place, *Servants obey your Masters according to the flesh in all things*; and again in another, *Let the Servants be subject to their own Masters, pleasing them well in all things, not answering again.* Yet still here must be some exceptions understood; for a Servant ought not upon pretence of this obedience, either break the Laws of the Commonwealth;

English
Reflect.
Pag. 59.

Ephes. 6. 1.

Ephes. 6. 5.
Coloss. 3.
22.
Tit. 2. 9.

or

or do any thing immoral, nor act contrary to the dictates of his own Conscience.

We must not expect a greater strictness in the terms of our promises, than God himself shewed in his threatnings. And yet it is sure there are some of his Threatnings to be met with, express in very absolute terms, and understood nevertheless with some exceptions and conditions. God says, in the Decalogue, and elsewhere, that he will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him. These words are absolute; and yet this Condition is contained in them, provided the Children do not turn from the evil way of their Fathers. God says by the mouth of his Prophet, *That he will destroy them that speak leasing, that he abhorreth the bloody and deceitful man; That he will rain upon the wicked, snares, fire and brimstone, that a horrible tempest shall be their portion.* The Threatning seems absolute; and yet in its true meaning, it is limited by this condition, unless they repent and implore the Mercy of God. God signified to the *Ninevites* by the Ministry of *Jonas*, *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed.* Can there any thing be more express and absolute than these words? And yet this clause was to be understood in them, except *Nineveh* humble it self and repent.

What is it then that M. de Meaux can discover in our Conditional Oath, that is extraordinary or strange? The Condition we understand in it is natural, it is one of our fundamental principles, it is so universally known among us, that a National Synod cannot possibly be mistaken in the point, nor understand this Oath in any other sense. For this very Condition is expressly in one of the Articles of our Confession of Faith, where we say, || *That neither Antiquity, nor Custome, nor the Number, nor the Wisdom of men, nor their Judgments, Aēs, Edicts, nor Decrees, nor Councils, nor Visions, nor Miracles ought to be set in opposition to the holy Scripture; but contrariwise, all things ought to be examined, regulated, and reformed according to the Scripture.* Our submission to the Aēs of our National Synods, is in subordination to this supreme Authority of Scripture, and it is by no means necessary, after so authentick a declaration, to express any conditions particularly. None of us ever equivocated in this matter, nor did ever any Synod pretend to act as absolute Masters of Consciences. So that M. de Meaux hath free leave to ar-

|| Ex hoc
efficitur,
neq; anti-
quitatem,
neq; con-
suetudi-
nes, neq;
multitudi-
nem, neq;
humanam
sapien-
tiam; neq;
judicia;

neq; edicta, vel decreta ulla, neq; concilia, neq; visiones, neq; miracula, Scripturæ illi Divinæ opponere licere; sed potius omnia ad ejus regulam, & præscriptum examinari, & exigi oportere. Gallic. Confes. Art. 5. vid Harmon. Confess. Edit. Genev. 1581. Pag. 11.

gue, affirm, and produce what he pleases, to prove our Oath implies an absolute submission; but he can never persuade us it does, because we all know very well, that we do not understand it in any such sense.

But, says he, if you understand it in this sense, *We swear and promise to follow your Decisions, if we find you judg well; there is no person on the Earth to whom one may not say as much. Mr. Claude may say it to me, as well as I to him.* M. de Meaux is mistaken. A Man cannot reasonably make this promise to any other persons, but such, as not only have a Call to judg in the name of all the Ecclesiastical Society, and are made, as it were, the Depositories of the common opinions; but besides that, are men that we have some reason to suppose, will judg uprightly. To proceed thus far, it is necessary a Man should have some ground to presume well of them, of their understandings, their abilities, and their honesty, otherwise this could not be a wise and considerate promise; and to interpose an Oath upon such an occasion, were to prophane the Name of God, and abuse our holy Religion. If I should ask M. de Meaux, wherefore he adores the host at the Elevation, seeing, according to his own principles, there can be no absolute certainty, but only a humane presumption of its being consecrated; he will answer me, according to the common opinion of the Doctors of his Church, That this Adoration hath constantly a condition implied and understood, that the Priest hath done all that is required for its consecration, that is, that this is the meaning and sense of his Adoration, *I adore Thee, if thou beest consecrated.* But if I tell him, he might say as much of the common Bread at his own Table, he will certainly answer me as the famous Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris does, That this cannot be, no not tho the very Condition were express, because the same Circumstances that attend the Bread upon the Altar, do not attend the Bread at any common Table, and therefore we cannot presume the same thing of the one that we may of the other. This Answer he need only apply to himself. I cannot engage myself for the same submission to his decisions, that I can to a National Synod; because I do not meet with the same Circumstances in him, nor can entertain the same favourable presumption of him.

But, says he further, *If you take an Oath that is no more than Conditional, without expressing the Condition of it, your Oath is then deceitful and illusory, and you do by magnificent words impose upon the peoples credulity.* This is the second head of his objection, which he propounds with mighty aggravations, and abundance of assurance. If after a promise, says he, confirm'd by so solemn an Oath, they pretend a Liberty is still left them to examine, I confess I know not what words signify, and there never was any mental evasion so full of illusion and equivocation.

English
Reflect.
p. 61.

Eng. Re-
flect. p. 63.

Eng. Re-
flect. p. 58

C

Gently

Gently, I beseech you, *Sir*; if our Oath be therefore an illusion, and a mental Equivocation, because we understand it with a condition of judging according to the Word of God, and a reserve of examination, then the Laws and threatnings of God, confirmed by all that Pomp and Majesty which appeared upon Mount *Sinai*, will, according to *M. de Meaux*, be likewise no better than illusions and mental equivocations, for the same Reason; because they are understood with some distinctions, exceptions and reservations. Men ought to be a little more cautious, and not brand all kinds of tacit implications so suddenly, with the name of Illusion and Mental Equivocation. When the matter treated of is of that nature, that the distinction, exception, or condition neither can, nor ought to be naturally understood in our words, according to the common rules of speech and conversation, then indeed to leave them to be understood, is an Illusion, and Mental Equivocation; for 'tis a downright Lye, a surprise committed upon the honest plainness of them we speak to, and a snare which we lay for their credulity. But if the condition, distinction, or reservation may be, and naturally are of themselves understood without any difficulty, or hesitation, and if in truth all the World understands them so, then this tacit implication is not only no Illusion, but it would on the contrary be an Illusion in any that should refuse to admit it, and take upon him to give the terms an absolute and unlimited sense.

Thus in the Civil State, when the Tenant or Vassal pays homage to his Lord of the Mannor, and swears service and fidelity to him, against all persons whatsoever; his Oath does so naturally include an exception of the Prince, that it would really be a fault to understand it otherwise. And it was merely from some Landlord's abusing this Oath of their Tenants, who stretched it so far as to shock the Power of the Prince, that the Emperor *Frederick* the first, appointed for the future, that the Emperor should be excepted in express terms, to remove all manner of pretence for his Subjects revolting. The same case we find in the Decretals, the Consuls of a Town belonging to the Pope, had condemned a Man to make restitution of some Goods, and put their Sentence in execution, notwithstanding the condemned person had Appealed to the Pope. Now this they had done upon pretence, that when they came on Consuls, they had sworn to see their Sentences, in Causes of that kind, put in execution before twenty days were expired, so that, in their opinion, the Appeal could not obstruct this execution, contrary to their Oath. The business being brought before Pope *Innocent* the third, he declared they ought to give way to the Appeal, and that they were to blame, to think their Oath could be any hindrance at

Decretal.
Greg. Lib.
2. de Jurej.
Tit. 24.
cap. 19.

all to their doing so: *Because*, says he, *in Oaths of this kind, there must always be understood an exception of the superiours right.* Debet intelligi jus superioris exceptum.

But what need we fetch Arguments so far off? M. de Meaux himself gives us a sufficient one, for the evading his accusation, in that Oath of Faith and Allegiance which I suppose he made to the Pope, (as all other Bishops do) at his promotion to a Bishoprick. The form of it we meet with in the *Roman Pontifical*, and nothing can be pretended more authentick, nor more absolute. The Bishop elect kneels at the feet of him that consecrates, and holding both his hands upon the Holy Gospels, he reads the form of the Oath, where among other things he swears, † *To be faithful and obedient to the Pope, to observe with all his Power, his Decrees, his Ordinances, his Disposals, his Reservations, his Provisions, and Apostolical Commands, to cause them to be observed by others, with all his might, to pursue and impugn Hereticks, Schismaticks, and Rebels against our Lord the Pope, or his Successors, and to labour for the Preservation, Defence, Encrease, and Extent of the Rights, Honours, Priviledges, and Authority of the Holy Roman Church, and our Lord the Pope.* This Oath is express in these very absolute terms, the only reserve in it, is the Episcopal Dignity, *Salvo meo ordine.* That is, says the Gloss, * he will serve him in such a manner as his Honour allows, and not by Arms. He promises Faith and Obedience in general, he specifies the Decrees and Ordinances of Popes in particular, and consequently their decisions in matters of Faith. And yet all this while two things are agreed upon, and unquestioned, the one, that the Pope may err in disquisitions of Faith; and the second, that his Authority, be it never so great, is still subjected to that of Councils and Canons. How does M. de Meaux understand it? For if his meaning be, that this Oath obliges the Bishops to a plenary and absolute obedience, without any condition, or limitation, and without reserving a right of Examination, this, according to his own Tenet, will be a rash Oath, because it may happen, that the Pope shall make Ordinances of Discipline, contradicting the Canons, and give decisions of Faith, which shall not be unreformable. But if he think there are

† Fidelis
& obedi-
ens ero
Domino
nostro Do-
mino N.
Pape, su-
isq; succes-
soribus
canonicè
intransi-
bus, —
Jura, ho-
nores, pri-
vilegia, &
authorita-
tem Eccle-
siæ Roma-
næ, Domi-
ni nostri
Papæ &
successo-
rum præ-
dictorum,
conserva-
re, defen-
dere, auge-

re & promovere curabo. — Regulas sanctorum Patrum, decreta, ordinationes, seu dispositiones, Reservationes, Provisiones, & mandata Apostolica totis viribus observabo, & faciam ab aliis observari; Hæreticos, Schismaticos, & rebelles eidem Domino nostro, vel successoribus prædictis, pro posse prosequar & impugnabo. Pontifical. Roman edit. Venet. 1582.

* Salvo meo ordine, id est, secundum quod pertinet ad meum honorem, quia non cum armis, Greg. Decret. Lib. 2. de Jurejur. Tit. 24. Cap. 4. in Gloss.

Exceptions and Conditions understood in it, and leave to himself still a right of Examination, this likewise will be according to what he hath said, a mental Evasion, full of Illusion, and Equivocation.

What difference now can he find between these two Cases, I mean between our Oath for the National Synod, and the Lords Bishops Oaths for the Pope, that will not make for us? We take an Oath before-hand for those decisions, which as yet we do not know; The Bishops take one too for the Decrees and Judgments, which they know nothing at all of, and which are yet to come. We swear submission in hopes that the decisions will be made according to Truth and Equity, tho this hope be not altogether infallible; The Bishops do as much, they swear obedience, in hopes that the Decrees of their Popes will not Deviate from the Canons of the Church, nor the Rules of Faith; nay, they do not express this hope as we do; and if they did express it, no man could say it was more certain or infallible than ours. We explain our Oath, by confining it to such things as shall be found agreeable to the Word of God; The Bishops confine theirs likewise to such things as shall not shock the Decrees of the Council of *Constantine*, concerning the Authority of General Councils, to such as shall not overthrow the Canons of the Catholick Church, to such as shall not be reformed by the Church. All the difference there is between them and us, lies here, that the Assembly to which we promise submission, does not pretend to infallibility, nor require an absolute obedience from us, so that it neither does, nor can take our Promise in any other sense, than we intend it; But the Pope, who puts in his pretensions to both these, may very well abuse the Bishops Oaths, by taking them in a sense never designed them, and so tax them with mental evasion, illusion, and equivocation. Besides, the Authority of God's Word, which we except, is a thing which among us is excepted naturally of it self, without any opposition, dispute, or difficulty at all; whereas in the Church of *Rome*, all the World knows men differ vastly concerning the Authority of Councils, and the Popes do not seem by any means convinced that it is superiour to theirs.

There is then no need of a reply in this Case; the same sentence that condemns us, condemns the Bishops; the same mouth that accuses us, does accuse them too; the same Pen that encounters us, encounters them; and now all upon a sudden, before we were aware, they and we are engaged in the same common Cause, and both under the same obligation to vindicate our selves against M. de Meaux. M. de Meaux says, our Oath can admit but of two senses; either this, *We promise, and swear to follow your decisions, if we find ye judg well*; or this other, *We are so perswaded you will judg well, that we swear, and promise to follow your decisions*.

English.
Reflect.
p. 61, 62.

ons. The same things the Bishops may apply to themselves. Their Oath can admit but Two senses, either, we swear and promise to receive your Decrees, if you decree well; or, we are so persuaded that you will decree well, that we swear and promise to follow your decrees. *M. de Meaux* goes on, *The First sense is a manifest illusion, and the other clearly supposes infallibility*: The Bishops shall answer this, if they think fit, for this cannot be true with regard to us, but it must be true with regard to them; nor false in their case, but it must be false in ours likewise.

Pag. 62.

M. de Meaux says further, *That for the making this Promise, and confirming it with an Oath, 'tis requisite, the Assembly 'tis made to, should have a Divine Promise of being assisted by the Holy Ghost, which is, That it should be infallible.* It now lyes upon the Bishops to tell us their Opinion of the Business; for change but the word *Assembly* for that of *Pope*, and they may apprehend it spoken to them; all that I shall venture to say upon it, is only this; that *M. de Meaux* seem'd to me, to have been so eager, and busy about us, that he had not any leisure to think, what would become either of his Reverend Brethren, or of himself. It is not therefore *Tradition* alone, that sometimes makes men say more than they would, and inspires into them things contrary to their own opinions, (as *M. de Meaux* tells us) but it seems, *Controversy* and dispute have sometimes the same operation.

Pag 62.

English.
Reflect.
Pag. 63.

The Second Reflection examined, concerning the Consequence, M. de Meaux pretends, will follow from our Principle, viz. That every particular Person is obliged to believe, that he may understand God's Word, better than the most universal Synods, and all the Church together.

What we have hitherto observed in *M. de Meaux* his First Reflection, was in proper speaking, no more than a Prelude to his Disputes, a frolick of Wit, upon some Articles of our Discipline; and, if I may so say, a sort of skirmish to bring on the fight, the main Battel is in this Second Reflection, and the Four other that follow. These contain this Prelates Two main Arguments, those Two upon which he cries out, *We must boldly say, Truth hath gained a manifest Victory.* These are the Two strange Propositions, at which *M. de Duras* continued in such an astonishment, when he told her, that *these were constant Maxims in the*

Protestants

Advertis.
Fol. 2.

English
Conf.
Pag. 15.
English
Advertis.
Fol. 2.
Ibid.

Ibid.

English
Advertis.
Ibid.

English
Reflect.
Pag. 64.

Ibid.
Pag. 64.

Protestants Religion, and necessary consequences of their Doctrine concerning the Churches Authority. These are the Two consequences, upon which he confidently affirms, That any Protestant how able and subtil soever, will certainly find himself reduced, not always indeed to hold his Peace, but what is no less strange than silence, to say nothing when he shall attempt to speak, but visible Absurdities. This he says beset Mr. Claude, what he avows, ruins his Cause; and the places where he stood without an Answer, are indeed such as suffer none. But now if this Minister should be so hardy to dispute this, what would become of him then? Where-ever (proceeds M. de Meaux) Mr. Claude shall say, That he hath not acknowledged, what I make him acknowledg in the Recital of the Conference, I engage my self, in a Second Conference, to draw again from him the same acknowledgment, and where-ever he shall say, That he was not without an Answer, I will force him without any other Argument, but those he has already heard, to Answers so visibly absurd, that any man of good sense shall acknowledg he had far better have been silent, than have made use of them. This Mr. Claude had need stand upon his guard then; and yet let him be as wary as he can, he is like to be caught. But it may be this respects him only in particular, and some other Ministers may possibly be more fortunate in the attempt. For fear it should be said, adds M. de Meaux again, that Mr. Claude engaged himself in these Inconveniences by ill management; I on the contrary affirm, That this Advantage is so inherent to our Cause, that there is no Minister, no Doctor, no man living, but must in the same manner sink under the like Argument. Those who will make tryal of it, shall see that this is no vain Promise.

In this manner M. de Meaux presents us with Sallies of his Courage, and the confidence he reposes in the strength of his Arguments. And now you may see the poor Protestant Religion felled down at a blow, without any possibility of rising again. Afterwards, coming to a particular Explication of the Business in hand, I pretended, saith he, to shew in the Conference, that by denying the Churches infallible Authority, one falls into these Two inconveniences, and I said, not into one of the Two, but inevitably into both of them. The First is, That every particular person, how ignorant soever he be, is obliged to believe, that for all that, he may understand Gods Word better than the most universal Synods, and all the rest of the Church together. The Second, That there is a time, when a Baptised Christian is not in a Condition to make an Act of Faith upon the Holy Scripture, but that, whether he will or no, he shall find himself obliged to doubt whether it be inspired by God. - If any man shall desire to know, what we ought to think of these Propositions, he protests in the beginning of his Discourse, That he hath not seen any of the pretended Reformed, in whom they have not caused an horror, and who hath not told him, he should be so far from ever believing himself, that he should de-
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test those which did. A little further he adds, *That this Doctrine will appear hideous to every docible Spirit.* But now, if the pretended Reformed have these Propositions in such a mighty abhorrence, as M. de Meaux pretends they have, if they appear hideous to them, How does this consist with their being the constant Maxims of the Reformed Religion, as M. de Meaux, positively affirmed to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, they are? It is not so very natural, to be of a Religion, to stick to it, and persevere in it unto the end, (for M. de Meaux hath seen some Persons do so); and yet all the while to detest the constant Maxims of it, to have them in a perfect abhorrence, and look upon them, as hideous; and it is still less so, to go and downright declare these Opinions to M. de Meaux. It continues, says he, *sixt by the Conference, that they are the Consequences of their Doctrine.* Of their Doctrine? That is, in all probability, consequences which M. de Meaux pretends to infer from their Doctrines, but such as they themselves disown, and reject, and think they are fallily charged with. No such matter says he; *They are such manifest Consequences, that they are owned by their Ministers.* And, not to depart from Mr. Claude's Relation, he himself asserts in it, *that after all Ecclesiastical Assemblies, every particular Person ought to examine, whether they have well understood God's Word, or no.* These pretended Reformed which M. de Meaux hath seen, are sure very strange men; for, if these be the constant Maxims of their Religion, if they be the consequences of their Doctrine, if their Ministers themselves own them, how is it possible they should be ignorant of them? And if they know them, How should they without changing their Religion immediately go and tell M. de Meaux, that they abhor them? And that they do not only not believe them themselves, but shall detest such as do believe them? I confess, this appears to me a little odd, and unaccountable, because I am pretty well assured, that M. de Meaux hath not as yet converted all those he hath seen of our Religion, and that by God's Blessing, our Religion hath not yet any occasion to apply that saying to him,

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Quis teneris oculus mihi fascinat agnos?

I am sorry, M. de Meaux should discover himself so much in love, so excessively fond of false subtilties; and, if he will give me leave to say so, of trifles, and things of nothing, which men are made to believe mighty matters; It is a temper, which I could heartily wish, did not shew it self in his Writings. And yet here upon this occasion, we find it in such a vaunting manner, that we cannot but take notice of it. All that he says of the consequences pretended to be deduced from our Principle, all that he exposes to view, and reckons up so particularly, all that he

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he is so peremptory in, throughout the Five Reflections, in which he insults, and triumphs with such abundance of self-satisfaction, are only some pitiful, little, popular equivocations, which, when once unmaskt, come either to nothing, or are false imputations upon us. To evince this, I will begin with this Prelate's Proposition, *That according to us, every particular Person, how ignorant soever he may be, is obliged to believe, that he may understand God's Word, better than the universal Synods, and all the Church together.* This Proposition is capable of a Two-fold fence. Either, First, That every particular Person, how ignorant soever he may be, is obliged to believe that he may understand the Word of God, better than the most universal True Synods, composed of honest, and upright Persons, of Pious, Wise, and Learned men, assembled in the Name of Jesus Christ, and than all the rest of the True Church together: Or Secondly, That every particular Believer, whom God assists with his Holy Spirit, is obliged to believe, that he may understand God's Word, better than the most universal False Synods, which shall be composed of Worldlings, byassed persons, and Hypocrites; that is, of men to whom God does not impart his Spirit, and better than all the Worldly men put together, though they falsely call themselves the Church.

Let M. de Meaux chuse which of these Two senses he shall think most for his turn to fix upon us. If it be the Second, I say, That his Consequence so much boasted of, falls to nothing, and less than nothing, for where is the fault, where the absurdity, of saying, That in matters of supernatural Revelation, (which as St. Paul says are not known, but by the Spirit of God; and, which God, according to that saying of Jesus Christ, reveals unto Babes, at the same time that he hides them from the Wise and Prudent,) God may give to every one of his Children more light and ability to understand them aright, than all the Children of this World shall have together, whether assembled in Synod, or not assembled, more than all those blind People shall have, whom God hath given over to a reprobate sense? What can M. de Meaux find in this Proposition, that should make it look so hideous, or rather, that is not agreeable to the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and his holy Apostles, and to the nature of the Christian Faith? If this were all the Business, what needed he carry on his Consequence, and exaggerate it at that rate? What needed he boast himself so mightily of the abhorrence it raised in all the pretended Reformed, that heard him speak of it, and of their promise to detest all such as should believe it? What need he upon this particular bid open defiance to every Minister, every Doctor, every man living; and handle this Proposition in such reproachful Terms, as a hideous Doctrine full of Pride, and Presumption? All he had to do, was only to tender this Consequence to Mr. Claude, and

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I Cor. 2.

Matth. 11.

make him, and every other Minister own it in Conferences, and before what Company he pleased, whether they would or no. And he may, if he please, spare himself that trouble; for, from this time forwards, Mr. *Claude* does not only own it himself, he does not only own it in the name of all the Ministers, he does not only promise to own it always; but he maintains further, in behalf both of himself, and all his Brethren, That there is no *Roman* Catholick in the World; no, not though it should be M. de Meaux himself, who can call it into question without renouncing the Gospel, and who ought not to reject the contrary opinion with horror and detestation.

But, if this Prelate shall make choice of the former sense, we shall not be afraid to tell him *boldly*, that it is a mere imputation cast upon us, a thing that the *Protestants* never affirm, nor ever will, which does not at all follow from their Principles, and which I was very far from granting in the Conference; in one word, that it is a thing we condemn universally, and are all ready to declare, That we look upon it to be contrary to right Reason, and opposite to the methods of Divine Providence.

Therefore let M. de Meaux come out of the Clouds; let him please to explain himself, and speak clearly and distinctly. For if by these Great words, *The most Universal Synods, and all the Church together*; he means false Synods, and a Church that is not true, we acknowledg, that every Believer may really understand the Word of God better than all those men, and his Business is, to see what consequence he can draw from hence, and in the mean time we will shew him what cannot be deduced from it.

Our Principles, as we have already seen very often in the course of this Dispute, are, 1. That the True Church consists of True Believers only; that is to say, such as God hath called inwardly, and regenerated by the light of his Holy Spirit, and the lively impresson of his Word upon their Souls. 2. That the true Believers are mixed in outward Communion with an almost infinite company of wicked men, worldlings, profane persons, and hypocrites, who are those Tares the Gospel mentions, which the Enemy sowed by Night among the good Corn. 3. That the Ministry is often supplied with such kind of People as are not of God's Church, but only by way of counterfeit and outward appearance, and are more Enemies, and Oppressors of the Church, than any Friends to it. 4. That out of this Ministry composed oftentimes of such Persons, the most General Assemblies, and most Universal Synods, though assembled *from the Four parts, and the middle of the World*, as M. de Meaux expresses himself, are elected. For they are not Angels come down from Heaven, but meer men; they are not Prophets, nor inspired Apostles, but ordinary Ministers; nor is it God that pitches upon them, by any immediate designation, but men Elect; and it oftentimes happens that the Electors, and the Elected, are

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both as good one as the other. 5. That, be that how it will, no man can be absolutely certain, that the persons composing this Assembly, are of the True Church of God, or do partake at all of his Holy Spirit, nor consequently can he be sure that their decisions are the *True Churches* decisions, any more than the false and counterfeit. 6. That nevertheless, men ought to presume favourably of such Assemblies, and hope that by the Grace of God they will discharge their duty; and, according as this favourable prejudice is grounded upon greater or less degrees of probability, the Effect of it ought to be proportionable, and incline the mind more or less on the Assemblies side. 7. But still, since granting the Presumption to be never so strong, it can be no more than humane, because there are no Promises made by God in behalf of these Assemblies, that they shall be infallible, and there are plain instances of their being not so, the only means which Believers have left to know the matter clearly, and to quiet their own Consciences, is to inspect and examine the decisions themselves, and compare them with God's own Word. Now from hence we hold it follows, that every Believer is obliged in order to the securing his Salvation, to examine the decisions according to that proportion of light he hath received, because to let his Salvation continue in hazardous Circumstances, to put himself in any danger of following prophane Persons, and so being damned along with them, were the most wicked thing, and would involve a man in the deepest guilt of any action in the World.

I do not here take upon me to enquire, whether these Propositions be true, or whether any thing might be alledged in opposition to them. After what hath been perused in the first part of this Work, I am perswaded that if there be but another view taken of them, there is not any of them, but, as you run over it with your eye, will appear either self-evident, or else advanced upon such proofs, as ought to put it past a doubt. All we have to do at present, is only to know what is the consequence of this right, which we allow all Believers to examine the decisions of Assemblies; and whether every particular person is obliged from hence to believe, that he may understand God's Word better than the most Universal Synods, supposing them True Synods, And than all the True Church together.

First then, I say, a very moderate Observation, and common sense will serve to inform us, that the right of examination being grounded upon our being uncertain whether the Synods be true or false Synods, and whether the Church which follows them be the true Church or no; and the design of that examination, being to rid us of that uncertainty, every Believer cannot be obliged to any more than Three things; To hope that
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God will enable him to discern that point aright. To believe, that if they be in very deed true Synods, and a true Church, he shall be enabled to understand the word of God as they do, and light upon the same meaning and interpretation with them. To believe, that if in reality these be found false Synods at the bottom, and the Church which adheres to them, no true Church, God can endue him with such a measure of his Grace, as that he may understand his Word better than these Assemblies. The right of examination implies only these three things, and to look for more from it, would be to act contrary to the rules of right Reason. The Examination is not design'd to correct the sense of the true Church, or to attain to a better understanding than hers; but quite contrary, it is allowed men, to the intent they may acquiesce in her sense, and follow it. The Examination does not proceed upon a supposition, That the true Church could at any time deviate from the true meaning of God's Word in matters essential and fundamental; nor upon a hope, that the Examiners shall be indued with a greater measure of light than she; but quite contrary, it goes upon a supposition, That she cannot at any time deviate from that true meaning, and perfectly intends to have no other opinion than hers.

Further yet, *M. de Meaux* his pretended consequence not only cannot be deduced from our principle, but is directly, and diametrically opposite to it; for there is a formal contradiction between saying, I examine, to the intent I may be found exactly agreeable to the true Church, in the understanding God's Word; and saying, I examine, that I may understand God's Word better than the true Church. There is a palpable contradiction between saying, If this Synod appear to me to be a true Synod, and such as hath followed the Word of God faithfully, I will acquiesce in its decision, and submit my self to it; and saying, If it appear to me, that this is a true Synod, and hath understood the Word of God aright, I will not however acquiesce in its decision, but will understand the Word of God still better than it hath done. So that the Consequence *M. de Meaux* fixes upon us, hath no more agreement with our principle, than light hath with darkness.

That which occasioned this Prelate's mistake, was, that he fancied we did at the very first, look upon a Synod formally assembled, as he does, to be the true Church of Christ, and that afterwards upon this persuasion, we proposed to our selves the taking its decisions into examination; whereas indeed we look upon an Universal Synod at first, to be only an Assembly, of which we have no more than a good presumption, but by no means an absolute certainty, That they are the true Church of Jesus Christ; and for that Reason we proceed to Examination. He sup-

posed his own principle instead of ours, and upon that mistake, a mistake not becoming a person of his abilities, he argued thus; These men take upon them to examine such decisions as they believe to be given by the true Church, therefore they believe they may understand God's Word better than the true Church. But he ought not to build upon so false a foundation, but rather argue the contrary way, and say, These men examine the decisions, to see whether they be delivered by the true Church or no, by their correspondence with the Word of God, and if they be found such, that they may acquiesce in them; they do not therefore think they can understand God's Word better than the true Church: Thus if he had taken our principle as he should have done, it would have led him to a Consequence quite opposite to that he hath deduced from it. But possibly he was ignorant of it? Not at all. He had seen it very distinctly explained in my Answer to his Discourse, and the sixth Consequence there, which the Reader may if he pleases consult.

To make this matter still more evident, it is necessary we distinguish between such apprehensions as are purely *speculative*, as we term it, and those that are *practical*. Betwixt these two kinds of apprehensions there is this difference, that for the most part the *speculative* act freely, and take their course without interruption, and that they are not near so liable to be perplexed, or forcibly carried on by humane interests and passions. Every man finds himself pretty free to Philosophise according to the dictates of his understanding, upon the several Systems of the World, the nature and course of the Stars, upon the Circulation of the Blood, and such like other things, where he does not commonly find himself biast to incline to one part more than another. But it is far otherwise with the apprehensions we call *Practical*, these scarcely ever act freely, by reason of their being so connected and interwoven with the advantages of this life. Then Interests excite the passions, and those passions darken for the most part, or put out our apprehensions; or if they do not put them quite out, they do at least force them to lye hid, and appear less clearly, and hinder them from exerting themselves. All the World knows what I say to be true, and there are very few who are not some more, some less sensible of it from their own experience. Hence proceed, not only erroneous opinions, fantastical conceits and whimsies in private men, but also publick errors, disorders and confusions, which we may observe predominant over whole Nations. It is very evident, that when once a fallity, a contradiction, an absurdity, tho never so ridiculous, hath found the way to link it self with mens worldly interests, it is generally received with applause and approbation, men are content to think it very good at that rate, their wits rally from all parts

to its succour, to countenance and maintain it, and its being in that post, is such a mighty advantage, that less than a sort of miracle will not overthrow it, for even the wisest men esteem it an act of prudence, to accommodate themselves to times and occasions.

This distinction thus premised, I say, that the thing which forms the decisions of the most universal Synods, concerning matters of Faith and Religion, is not purely the *Speculative* apprehension of that Assembly, but their *Practical* apprehensions, the consequence of which is, that Passion and Interest have a very great share in them. It is not properly the Learning, nor Study, nor the Capacity, nor the Dignity, nor the great number of Members, that prevent erroneous decisions being given by these Assemblies; but it is Probity, Piety, and the Fear of God, and if these be away, it will be no longer the Word of God that presides in Synods, but the passions of men, temporal respects, and worldly Interests.

When therefore we allow every Believer a right of examining what shall be decided, our meaning is not, That these particular men have either more Learning, or more Wit, or more of that Speculative apprehension which is acquired by study, than there shall be in a Synod, tho we should suppose the members of it to be all of them prophane and worldly men. Not but that there is a possibility of this too, as M. de Meaux himself acknowledged in his Conference, *Ofentimes*, says he, *One wise man may be able to give better instructions than a whole Synod together.* There is no body however but knows; that prophane and worldly men who have studied, and made it their business, shall attain to a greater degree of this kind of apprehension, than plain Believers. But our meaning is, That there may be in a Synod, let it be as Universal as it will, unless it be composed of honest and good men, less of that practical apprehension and knowledg, that is, a great deal more corruption, a great deal more of partial and politick considerations, a great deal more remissness and looseness of principles, a great deal more of secret engagements to advance and patronize an Error, a great deal less love for the Truth, than shall be met with in each private Believer, whom God hath regenerated by the power of his Grace. And this is evidently sufficient to give men a right, and lay upon them an obligation to examine what is decided.

Let us illustrate this by an instance. I dwell in a City, which I know to be composed both of good and bad Citizens. I know that here are some Traitors crept into the very Senate, but I neither know what persons these are in particular, nor how strong, nor how many there may be. The Senate meets, and agrees upon Resolutions; it is possible the honest

honest party got the day, but it may be too that the ill mens vote carried it. In this case I cannot be sufficiently satisfied for my own ease and security, but by examining their deliberations, and the measures they have taken, that so I may not follow the ill part, while I design the good. Will you say now, that this examination implies I believe my self able to understand the real Interests of the City, better than the best Senators, and the most honest faithful Citizens? No sure, it were a very absurd Collection. Or will you from thence infer that I pretend to a greater share of speculative knowledg in judging of this Interest, than the corrupt Senators, and all the Citizens of their party? Not that neither. But what would you say then? Why only, that this supposes, that I being my self an honest Citizen, do hope, that if the Senators have been faithful to the trust reposed in them by their Country, my apprehensions will agree with theirs; and on the contrary, that if they have prevaricated, and dealt perfidiously, my practical apprehensions may be more sincere and upright than theirs. This is very easily applied to the matter in hand.

Lastly, That M. de Meaux may receive full and perfect satisfaction in this point of his pretended Consequence, I tell him, that there ought to be a distinction made of those decisions which Synods may give in points of Doctrine: For some of them respect only School Controversies, and such as the Learned differ in; but the common people are not concerned in at all. Of this kind, for instance, was the decision upon that question so much bandi'd between the *Latin* and *Greek* Church, concerning the Procession of the Holy Ghost, and several others of the like nature. But then there be others touching such things as are necessary or prejudicial to the Salvation of every particular person, and, by consequence, they do, if I may so speak, fall properly within their Jurisdiction, and they are competent Judges of them, and of this sort are the decisions made by the Council of *Trent*, concerning the Adoration it prescribes to be given to the Sacrament, the Invocation of Saints, and the Worshipping their Images.

When we say, every Believer is under an obligation to Examine, it would be absurd to fancy this were spoken with respect to the decisions of the first rank; for those being above the capacity of the plainer sort of men, and not at all concerning their Salvation, cannot lay any absolute obligation upon such, to trouble themselves with them, and consequently not to examine them. The second sort therefore are the only ones they have any thing to do with, which are knowable by the plainest people, and with relation to which, God imparts to every believer, how plain and ignorant soever he be, sufficient means of knowledg, or

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at least disposes him with a good upright Conscience with Piety, and Sincerity, which in affairs of this nature, is a much safer way, and a more just Principle, than all the Learning in the World, where such a Conscience is wanting. So that, when we have deducted all the necessary abatements from M. de Meaux's Consequence, it will be found, that all comes to no more than this, That every Believer is allowed to think, that in matters wherein his Salvation is concerned, and which have a plain and immediate influence upon the Conscience of every Believer, he may have more practical Apprehension, and knowledg how to follow God's Word, than the most universal Synods, in which Temporal respects, worldly Interests, and the passions of men bear sway, and not the Spirit of Jesus Chaist. This is all that follows from our Principle; and let M. de Meaux say what he will, there can be no more concluded from it. This Prelate therefore was manifestly out in his reckoning; and after what I have said just now, I believe he himself cannot but think so.

That which is still more strange in all this, is, that he never observ'd, nor provided against his own pretended Consequence being retorted back upon himself with at least as much strength and reason, as it can possibly be objected to us. As for our part, we who own no other for the True Church, but that which is composed of True Believers, will constantly affirm upon our own principles, that we own every Believer obliged to think, he may understand God's Word better than a whole Ecclesiastical Assembly, only upon a supposal, that this Assembly falsely arrogates to it self the name of the True Church, when it is not really so. But if we may borrow M. de Meaux his own Terms, and should tell him, That by denying as he does, to own any infallibility in particular Doctors, in each single Bishop, in the Schools, in the most celebrated Faculties, in Provincial Councils, in National Councils, though never so numerous, and even in the Popes themselves, giving determinations, *ex Cathedra*, he falls into this inconvenience, that hereby he obliges every particular person, how ignorant soever he may be, to believe, that he may for all that understand the Word of God better than these Doctors, these Bishops, these Schools, these Faculties, these Councils, these Popes, and than all their followers and Adherents; what could he answer to this Argument, unless it were to return the same thing we do? Is there any more consequence in saying thus, You do not hold an universal Synod to be infallible, therefore you think you may understand the Word of God better than it; than there is in this; You do not hold these Doctors, these Bishops, these Schools, these Faculties, these Councils, these Popes, infallible, therefore you think you may understand God's Word better than they? And the Consequence being

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acknowledged equally strong on both sides, as indeed there can be no dispute but it is, is it any more probable, that a plain private man, how ignorant soever he may be, should have a clearer apprehension than his Guide, than his Bishop, than all the *Sorbon* College, than an Assembly of all the Clergy in *France*: Or lastly, than a Pope himself, the Head and Husband of the Catholick Church, together with all his Cardinals, and all his Adherents; than for one to affirm, That he may apprehend more clearly than an Universal Synod to whom God does not communicate his Spirit, but gives them over to a reprobate sense? Is not there as great inconvenience attending one of these Assertions, as the other? Is there not not as much Pride and Presumption in one of the Propositions, as there is in the other? And will not any person, who shall engage M. de Meaux, and contend for the infallibility of Popes and National Councils, have the very same advantages over M. de Meaux; which he hath pretended to have against us?

To this perhaps it may be said, That these Two cases are vastly different, in that a single private person does not oppose these other subordinate Authorities, which are liable to Err, any further than is consistent with his submission to the Churches Supreme and infallible Authority, when assembled in a general Council; whereas according to our *Hypothesis*, this particular person submits his Faith to no visible Authority upon Earth whatever, nor does not acknowledge any of them all to be infallible.

But this Objection does nothing but confound the matter; for what signifies this difference to the matter we are treating of? Does it at all mitigate the inconvenience there is in affirming, That plain private men, how ignorant soever, may understand God's Word better than all the Learned *Sorbon*, or a whole Council of all *France*, or than the Pope of *Rome* himself? Does it convey more light and apprehension to these particular men, or make the meaning of God's Word one jot easier to them? Does it make this setting up of themselves to be no Pride, granting that endeavouring to secure ones own Faith and Salvation by ones own judgment is so? Will not the *Sorbon* Convocations, the National Councils, and the Popes, be continually crying out, that such men are guilty of rashness, and intolerable presumption, in fancying, That they may understand the sense of the Catholick Church better than all Them? M. de Meaux will Reply, That he does not mean single private men should take upon them to examine after the *Sorbon*, nor after a National Council, and much less then after a Pope, though he be not believed Infallible; and that he intends this Examination should be reserved for a General Council. Very well. But till there come a General Council, what

what must these particular men do? Put the case, that the Pope for instance, hath delivered true or false decisions in Articles of Faith, and hath enjoined these to be accordingly believed and practised, upon pain of being Anathematized, and incurring the Displeasure of *St. Peter*, and *St. Paul*, as their Decrees commonly run; What is to be done? Must men refuse to act according to these Decisions, till such time as a General Council hath either ratified, or reformed them? Or must they act as they direct, till further order be taken? The First course falls under the same inconvenience, that *M. de Meaux* hath clamoured so much against; every particular Person, though never so ignorant, will be obliged to think he may understand the Word of God, and the sense of the Catholick Church, better than the Pope of *Rome*, and all his followers; for did he think otherwise, he would without any scruple submit to his Orders. The Second is absurd; for whoever heard of believing for a time, and till order be taken? And if that decision were Heretical, ought a man to turn Heretick at a cheap rate, and by way of Provision?

As for the charge of Pride, upon which *M. de Meaux* still insists, I will with his good leave take the confidence to say, 'Tis as idle a thing as can be in the World. I had before said in the Conference, That what this Prelate calls Pride in us, does only proceed from the freedom of God's dispensation, who gives his Holy Spirit to whom he pleases, and very often to such as are but meanly esteemed, excluding what the opinion of men accounts greatest, according to what Jesus Christ hath taught us, in that memorable passage: *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes.* *M. de Meaux* may think his pleasure; but this is a substantial answer. It is no pride in any Believer, though never so plain, and never so much a Babe, humbly to beg of God such knowledge, as is necessary for his Salvation, and to hope that God will grant it him, though he should at the same time deny it to persons of the highest Honour and Dignity in the Church.

Moses was not a Preacher of Pride, when he said to the *Israelites*: *Deut. 4 7.* *What Nation is there so great, which hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?* Nor was *David* a Preacher of Pride, when he said to the same purpose, *God sheweth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and Judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them.* And in another place, *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant.* The blessed Virgin did not think of inspiring men with Pride, when she said, that God *putteth down the mighty from their seats, and exalteth them of low degree. That he fills the Hungry with*

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25.Psal. 147.
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Matt. 13. *good things, and sends the rich empty away.* Jesus Christ inspired no pride, when he told his Disciples, *To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given.* If any man will do the will of my Father, he shall know of my Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self. Nor St. James, when he said, *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.* What Pride is it to believe, that God does not respect mens persons, but distributes his Graces of illumination as he pleases, and to whom he thinks good?

Besides this answer which Christianity furnishes us with, it is evident, that even in matters of Civil Conversation, and such as are known either by natural or acquired abilities, it is no pride at all to examine after persons, who are esteemed very sufficient; but withal such, as we think it not utterly impossible, should either be imposed upon themselves, or endeavour to impose upon us. Shall a man of an Estate be called proud, because he hath a mind to take an exact account of his Business himself, and does not wholly refer himself to his Steward, whom yet he believes much better versed in those things than he? It is pride in a man that hath a suit depending, to examine after his Lawyers, and inform himself particularly of their determinations, and their reasons, though he hath never so great an opinion of their abilities? It is pride in us to offer to judg of the nature and quality of the Meat that is brought to our Table, though we are very sensible, that the persons who chuse and dress it, understand it a great deal better? 'Tis a natural, primary and indisputable right, that every one hath, to know the things which properly and personally concern him; the right others pretend to in this case, can be so no further than it is communicated, it is a right derived from the other, and hath a constant dependance upon it. So far are we then from being guilty of pride, in going about to examine after others, what thus nearly concerns us, that on the contrary, not to do it, would be a negligence highly sinful; especially supposing, as we by our Principle do, that these others are not endued with any such thing as Infallibility; and it would be the most intolerable injustice in others, to endeavour to deprive us of this right of examining; when our own concerns are in agitation, we have the first call and obligation to interest our selves; the call which others have, is but a secondary one, and taken into our Assistance, and being a secondary and auxiliary one, it must for that very reason allow the original one to continue still.

This then is only a cunning fetch made use of to rob Believers of their Rights, to enslave their Consciences, and get to themselves the

dominion over their Faith. Under this false pretence of pride, they throw them into negligence, and by that negligence they bring them into slavery. Indeed, if our temporal concerns lay at stake, this loss might be endured; but the Truth of God is concerned, the highest of all our duties, the salvation of our Souls; And what recompence can be made a Man for such losses as these? I confess, it is very taking, to find out a way of excusing men from trouble of living in a perfect unconcernedness as to matters of Religion, and to refer themselves entirely to their Guides for them. And for this reason, I do not question but abundance of men in the World would be better pleased with M. de Meaux his principle, than ours, because that suits their inclination. They desire no better, than to be excused from a study that would cost them pains, and upon that account can be very well content, that M. de Meaux should call that Pride, which we call the indispensable duty of every Christian. But this very consideration ought to make men suspicious of his Principle.

Moreover it appears by all I have now said, that M. de Meaux mistook himself again, when he look'd upon what he met with in my Relation, to be an acknowledgment of his Consequence, *viz.* That every particular person is obliged, after every Ecclesiastical Assembly, to examine whether it hath understood God's Word well, or no. There is a mighty difference between saying, A man ought to examine with a design to inform himself, whether an Assembly hath understood God's Word well; and saying, That men should examine with a persuasion, that they may understand God's Word better than an Assembly that hath understood it well already. The first proposition is what I advanced in the Conference, and will always be a wise Man's aim, who seeks the true Church, that he may cleave to her. The second, which M. de Meaux fixes upon me, can be no bodies but an extravagant fellow's that knows not what he says, and would undertake to amend what he owns to be well done already. I observe too, by the way, that in this pretended acknowledgment which M. de Meaux will have me make in these words, *That there is not any absurdity, nor any pride in a person's believing that he may understand God's Word better than all Ecclesiastical Assemblies, what good Order soever is kept in them, and of whatsoever Persons they may be composed.* That last clause, of *whatssoever Persons they may be composed*, are purely his own addition; I never told him any thing like it, nor will any such thing be found in my Relation.

Here the Prelate tells us over again, a Story which Monsieur Maimbourg had told before concerning the Synod of Dort, and from thence endeavours to deduce some things that may illustrate his pretended Consequence,

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quence, after which he concludes in this manner: *I will maintain, That Mr. Claude being asked, whether any private person whatever, of his Church, may rely upon an Authority so great among them as this is, without examining any farther, if he be pressed to answer positively Yea, or No, to so precise a question, and in a fact so well circumstantiated, he must say No; and that in fine, notwithstanding all this, they were but men, how able, how illuminated, how holy soever they are imagined, still subject to fail, whose sentiments, if one should follow blindfold, and without examining, he would equal men to God.* Thus, adds he, according to the Maxims of the New Reformation, every private person, even to the most ignorant woman, ought to believe that they can understand the Holy Scripture better than an Assembly composed of whatever is greatest in that whole Church which he acknowledges to be the only one where God is purely served, and not only better than this Assembly, but than all the rest of the Church, and than all that he knows in the whole Universe.

Here again M. de Meaux falls into the same mistake that he hath done every where else; and never considers that the obligation every one lies under to examine, is proportioned to each man's advantages, and therefore with respect to the meanest and most ignorant; it is confined to things absolutely necessary to salvation, as I have already said: So that whatever we meet with in the Synod of *Dorts* decisions that is not of this kind, will not at all concern those ignorant women M. de Meaux mentions: These are only for persons of a larger capacity. I own indeed, these more understanding persons will undertake this examination, with a design to discover whether the Assembly did in truth judg according to the Word of God; and if it appear they did, then to submit to those decisions: But this infers nothing less, than pretending to understand God's Word better than the True Church. For the Synod of *Dort*, as well as all other Synods, might not have been the true Church, there is no other way of being satisfied that it is the True Church, but by this distinguishing Character, that it hath judged according to the Word of God, and this Character can never be certainly found out, but by Examining. So that it would be absurd to say men examine after the True Church; for when once a Man can with certainty suppose that it is the True Church, there is no further examination to be made, 'tis done already to our hands.

What I say of the Synod of Dort (says M. de Meaux) Mr. Claude and every other Minister will be forced to say of the Council of Nice, of the Council of Constantinople, of that of Ephesus, of that of Chalcedon, and the rest, which they and we receive with common accord: And when they shall say it, they will say nothing new or unusual in their Religion. Calvin said it in formal terms, speaking in general of all the Councils of the precedent Ages.

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Reflect.
page 66.

I answer, 'Tis true, we receive the Councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon, for no other reason, but because we find them agreeable to the Word of God; and also because we do really find them agreeable to God's Word, we embrace them, and submit to them with abundance of respect. These holy Councils having submitted themselves to Scripture, never pretended that men ought to look upon them otherwise than in this subordination to, and dependance upon That. And for what concerns Mr. Calvin, consult but that very passage alledged by M. de Meaux, and that will shew he taught nothing but what we do now. || *When, says he, the Authority of a Council is alledged, I desire first it may be considered, in what time, and for what cause it was assembled, and what persons assisted at it: Afterwards, that the principal point be examined according to the Rule of the Scripture; so that the Councils definition have its weight, and be as a prejudice, but that it hinder not the Examination.* The meaning of this is not, that we should first take it for granted they are the True Church, and afterwards descend to examination: But his meaning is, that we should inform our selves as punctually and particularly as we can, of the time, the occasion, and the persons, and their quality, that so we may entertain a just presumption, and as favourable as the Cause will bear; but that, if we would attain to an absolute certainty, we must of necessity go further, and look into the very decisions made by them. This is what Calvin would have done, this is also exactly the same that we contend for, and that reason requires; for there is not, in strict speaking, any thing besides this Essential Character, that puts a difference between true and false Councils.

Meaux's
Eng. Re-
flect p. 67.
|| *Quoties*
Concilii
alicujus
decretum
profertur,
expendi
primum
diligenter
velim, quo
tempore
habitu
fit, quâ de
causâ ha-
bitum, &
quo consi-
lio, quales
homines

interfuerint; deinde illud ipsum de quo agitur ad Scripturæ amissum examinari, idq; in eum modum ut Concilii definitio pondus suum habeat, sitq; instar præjudicii; neq; tamen examen quod dixi impediatur. Calvin Institut. Cap. 9. Sect. 8.

Thus much I thought fit to offer to Mr. de Meaux, for a proof that his Consequence is erroneous; The plausible advantages he gives it, and this insulting way of propounding it, obliged me to insist longer upon it than the thing deserved, and still we are not come to the end of this dispute neither. This Prelate does not only charge us with examining after the True Church, but he goes further, and lays at our door an opinion, that men should examine after the very Apostles, and Jesus Christ himself, and upon this subject he spends the remainder of his Reflection.

For

Eng. Re-
flect. p 67,
68.

For what relates to the Apostles, he grounds his discourse upon a passage in the Author of an Answer to his Exposition, *This Answer*, says he, *is printed with the approbation of four Ministers of Charenton, and the passage is writ in these Terms, That we do not see the Apostles published their Decision with an absolute Order it should be obeyed: But they sent Paul, Barnabas, and Silas, for to instruct the Faithful to keep this Ordinance, that is, evidently to perswade them the motives and grounds of it, which says not, that they were forbid to examine.*

It is very strange, that M. de Meaux should so little regard the Justice of his accusations. The meaning of this Author is plain. He does not say, that Believers were under an absolute obligation to examine the Apostles decisions, or that in strictness they ought not to receive them upon their Authority; but the thing he says is, that the Apostles never prohibited this Examination, and that the decision they gave at *Jerusalem* was not published by them with an absolute command of obedience. He forms in this place an Argument by way of Comparison; and his meaning is, That if the Apostles themselves, notwithstanding they were sufficiently assured of their own Infallibility, did not however require this blind implicit submission to their Doctrine, much less ought the Councils of the *Romish Church* to require it, upon whom the Holy Ghost never descended in the form of fiery tongues, as he had upon the Apostles. If M. de Meaux had but consulted his second thoughts here, he would have found, that this Author's Observation is as true as any thing in the World can be; for besides what he has urged in proof of it, does not St. Paul tell the *Corinthians*, *That he spoke unto them, as unto wise men, and that they should judg what he said?* In another place he says, *That he commended himself to every man's Conscience in the sight of God, by manifestation of the Truth.* And afterwards, that, *as he had manifested himself to God by bringing men to the Faith, he trusted also to be made manifest to their Consciences.* And again in another place, *That he took men to record, That he had declared unto them all the Counsel of God.* A great many other such Texts there are, that shew the Truth of what this Author hath said, That the Apostles never forbid an Examination, nor rigorously required this blind obedience which the Church of *Rome* does.

When M. de Meaux shall please to consider his subject a little more carefully than he has done hitherto, he will find, that as there is a sort of examination, that cannot be reconciled with an absolute Authority, so there is likewise another by no means inconsistent with, or prejudicial to it. A Master gives his Servant peremptory Orders about the business of his Family, and a King as absolute ones to his Subjects about affairs of State; but yet it often happens, that they do it in such a method as is

not

1 Cor. 10.

15.

2 Cor. 4.2.

2 Cor. 5.

11.

Acts 20.

26, 27.

not only authoritative, but perswasive too. Do they by this means recede from their Authority? Not in the least. But the reason of this is, that their Commands are so just and reasonable, that they desire the persons under their Government may themselves acknowledg that they are so; and to this purpose, they take a more gentle winning way, a way more agreeable to mens nature, and which will render their obedience more cheerful and pleasant. We must therefore put a difference between such an Examination, as implies men are not satisfied that what is taught them is just and true, and which is designed to clear that doubt; and such a one as supposes men perswaded of that, and is undertaken only for more full information, and the strengthening them in their Faith. It is granted on all hands, that the Apostles Doctrine was not subject to the first sort of these Examinations, with respect to Believers; because they already owned the Authority and Infallibility of these Divine persons, and this was a supposition, which they never pretended to question afterwards. But it does not follow from thence, that they were barred from all Examination, nor that the Apostles themselves would not be very well pleased, when they should examin the other way; that is, with a design to inform, and confirm themselves. That what they received upon the judgment of their Authority and Infallibility, they might receive also, by the impression which the truth of the things themselves would make upon them, and by the proper and immediate perswasion of their own Consciences. This is what St Paul terms, *The approving of every man's Conscience*; this the testimony which he desired should be given him of the Faithful; and for this Reason it is, that Faith is called in Scripture, *a Knowledge, an enlightning the Eyes of the Understanding, an imprinting the Laws of God in the Soul, an Opinion, a Taste, an Odour of Life, a Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power, and an Unction which teaches us all things*. God himself would have us examine his Laws, and his ways thus; Not to call his Authority in question, for this would be the most heinous Crime we could possibly be guilty of; but that we may to our Opinion of his Supream Authority over us, add that of his Laws and his Ways being Just and True, and Good, and so be our selves wrapt with Love and Admiration of them.

Upon this account it is, that he argues the Case with us in Scripture; that he offers to plead his own rights with us, and desires we should judg of them, and that he enjoins us to consider, and meditate upon his Mysteries, and to compare his word with of that men, to the intent we may be convinced of the difference. When Authority is attended with Truth and Justice, such an examination is so far from impairing, that it strengthens and fixes it more and more; for the Throne is established by

Prov. 16.
Righteousness, 12.

Righteousness says *Solomon*. But when men grow sensible, that things will not bear being lookt into, and begin to fear that their counterfeit alloy should be discovered, when brought to the Touch; then it is, that Authority cannot away with any Examination, and must put out the Eyes of the World, to keep them in their obedience. Now the Apostles knowing no such fear, never betook themselves to the use of such wary Methods. they never forbid Examining; in proportion, as they taught Believers the Secrets of God, they likewise desired, they should be filled themselves with
 Col. 2. 2. *the Riches of the full assurance of understanding; and that the Word might*
 Col. 3. 16. *dwell in them richly in all Wisdom,* to use their own Expressions; and proportionably as they told men, God had brought Light into the World, they likewise taught them to open their Eyes, and to walk as Children of Light. Thus *M. de Meaux* could not possibly do any thing more against himself, than to cry out upon that passage of the Author we have now been treating of; and that Author could not possibly have brought any stronger or more convincing Argument against the Church of *Rome*, than the Example of the Apostles, which ought upon more accounts than one, make them blush who go in a contrary way, and deliver themselves in another sort of Language.

Let us come now to consider the person of Jesus Christ, at the time when he was upon Earth. *M. de Meaux* pretends, that we are of opinion, men ought to have examined after him too; and as this Accusation is the most heinous; so is the Cheat he puts upon us in it, the most palpable that can be. Observe what he proceeds upon. To prove that the Principle of a blind and implicate obedience to Ecclesiastical Assemblies, was a false and destructive Principle, I had in our Conference alledged the instance of the *Jewish Synagogue* assembled, who had condemned Jesus Christ for an Impostor, and held that the Miracles he wrought, he wrought them by *Beelzebub*; from whence I had inferred; That if *M. de Meaux* his Principle took place, *viz.* That private persons have no right to examine after Assemblies, and that it would be intolerable pride in them to attempt it, then Jesus Christ ought not to have address himself to the People for their Conversion, nor ought the People have heard him, much less still have believed in him; so that *M. de Meaux* his Principle perfectly overthrew Christian Religion, and stifled it in its very Birth.

Monsieur M. de Meaux had answered, *That there was then upon Earth a living and speaking Authority, and the greatest that ever was in the World; even that of Jesus Christ himself, to whom God gave Testimony from Heaven, and who wrought Miracles.* To this I replied, That it was that very Supreme and Infinite Authority of Jesus Christ, which the Assemblies of the Synagogue

gogue had condemned; so that if M. de Meaux his Principle had prevailed, the People could not look upon Jesus Christ, as any other than an Impostor, according to the declared Opinion of the Church; nor upon his Miracles, as any better than illusions of the Devil, because the People would not have been suffered to examine at all, after the decision then already given. And it must not be said, That Jesus Christ's Authority decided the Question; for an Authority can decide nothing, till it be first received and acknowledged; and that Jesus Christ's was not as yet; for the very thing in Controversy was, Whether they should receive it, or reject it.

Thus far then it is evident, that the business to be enquired into, is not to know, whether the Synagogue did well in condemning Jesus Christ's Miracles, and rejecting his Authority, my Argument supposes quite contrary, that it was the most horrible sin they could commit; nor to know, whether according to our Principle, the People ought to reject Jesus Christ's Miracles and Authority; my whole Argument looks quite the other way, and is designed to shew, that they ought to have done what they did, that is, refuse obedience to the judgment of the Church, and come over to Jesus Christ. But the only thing we are concerned to know is, how they ought to have behaved themselves after this judgment, according to M. de Meaux's Principle, which says, they ought to examine after the Assemblies. I assert, That they could not, proceeding upon that Principle, look upon Jesus Christ any otherwise than an Impostor, nor upon his Miracles to be any better than Juggles and Conjurations; because the Assembly had determined that they were such. Whereupon I concluded M. de Meaux his Principle to be false and destructive of the Christian Religion.

This was my Opinion, and thus I argued. Now let us see what followed. First of all M. de Meaux confidently affirms, That he heard nothing of all this Reply in the Conference. I make no Reflections upon that, he is Master of his own Ears. I shall only say, There was nothing in all this, nothing that he might not have seen before, in the Defence of the Reformation. But however, let us observe what he urges against it now. *It were indeed better, says he, to be silent, than to say such things: But since Mr. Claude will have said them, he must then also say, That because Jesus Christ's Miracles were rejected as deceitful signs, by the Envious, by the Obstinate, in one word, by the declared Enemies of the Truth; these Miracles were not convincing enough to oblige men to believe Jesus Christ on his word, without examining further; and that for example, after he had raised Lazarus in express Testimony that God had sent him, those that beheld with their Eyes so great a Miracle, were, I do not say permitted, but expressly obliged to examine, Whether Jesus Christ were sent by God.* He must I say, carry the necessity of

English
Reflect.
Pag. 69.

English
Reflect.
Pag. 69.
70.

M. de Meaux's *Reflections examin'd.*

the Examen to this Excess; otherwise, 'twill be true, as I have said, That there was then a visible and palpable Authority, to which every one ought to submit without examining, so that there was never any time when men were less exposed to the Temptation of Pride, by elevating themselves above all living and speaking Authority, since Jesus Christ, the most Living, and most speaking, as well as the greatest and most infallible that ever was, was then on the Earth; and that they preferred not themselves before the Synagogue, but by submitting to Jesus Christ, whose miracles as himself said, took away all Excuse from those that believed not in him: which the Assembly that condemned him, knew so well, that obstinately refusing to believe in Jesus Christ, they found no other answer to his Miracles, nor any other means to resist him, but to make him away, and with him Lazarus also, to stifle if they could at once with the Miracles they had seen, the Memory of him that wrought them.

Thus it is that he takes off the objection, after which he falls to crying up Jesus Christ's Sovereign Authority, to shew the force and the Divinity of his Miracles, and the obstinacy of the Jewish Synagogue, in that they refused to own and receive him.

I must frankly confess, That I never met with any Answer to compare to this. There are Three things remarkable in it; the First is, That it never touches the main difficulty at all. The Second, That it makes for our Cause, and against M. de Meaux's. The Third, That it deduceth the most wretched Consequence in the World, to contrive a Topick of Accusation against Us.

I say, It never comes up to the main difficulty; for, as I just now made the case plain, our business is not to enquire, what the People ought to have done absolutely speaking, nor what they ought to have done according to the Principle I maintain; but to enquire how they ought to have behaved themselves upon Mr. Meaux's his Principle; that is, after the Synagogue had solemnly declared, That Jesus Christ's Miracles were illusions of the Devil, and that he himself was a wicked man, and a seducer. Now this is what the Answer says not one word to. To say, That the Synagogue at that time was composed of Envious, Obstinate persons, and such as were declared Enemies of the Truth, is but telling us what we all knew before; but it is no answer at all. To say, That Jesus Christ was a Living and Speaking Authority, the Greatest and most Infallible that ever appeared upon Earth; and that it was no pride for men in obedience to him, to disobey the Synagogue, is also to tell us what none of us are ignorant of; but still this is no answer. To say, That Jesus Christ's Miracles were such as left all who did not believe in him without excuse, and that they were convincing enough, to oblige men to believe him upon his own word, is to say some-

something indeed, but it does not remove the difficulty. To take off that, a man must shew which way those private persons, who according to M. de Meaux's Principle had believed that they might with a safe Conscience, nay, and ought to obey the Synagogues decisions implicitly, and that it was really a fault to pretend to examine afterwards; which way I say, they could, without going against this Principle, receive Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and his Miracles as Divine Operations, after that the Synagogue had pronounced him an Impostor, and his Miracles the work of Beelzebub. A man must shew, how a People, who according to this Principle ought not to have any other Eyes than those of the Synagogue, nor entertain any Opinion but theirs, could possibly look upon Jesus Christ and his Miracles, any otherwise than the Synagogue had done, without entrenching on this Principle. Say as long as you please, that there was in Jesus Christ's Miracles a full demonstration of the Power of God, and a manifest attestation of his being sent by him, that there could be nothing else in opposing them, but the most palpable Malice, and plain obstinacy; I do not only agree with you in all this, but I will say it more than you. This is not the pinch of the Question. Jesus Christ was a living and a speaking Authority, the greatest and most infallible that ever was upon the Earth, for his Authority was Divine; he proved, and confirmed it by such Miracles as of right ought upon their own accounts to have been received without any further Examination. All this is granted. But still the Synagogue had condemned these Miracles, and disallowed his Authority, and according to M. de Meaux his Principle, their condemning them, ought to have made both the Authority, and the Miracles of no Effect, and have been a Bar to the People's receiving them. This is the main Objection; this the point to be answered. Our Business is not to know, Whether they might, or might not renounce the Authority of the Church, to own another; it is evident they were obliged to acknowledg Jesus Christ's. But we are concerned to know, supposing them to have been of a persuasion, that a perfect and absolute obedience was due to the Synagogue, which way these men could notwithstanding without breach of duty, acquiesce in those Miracles which the Synagogue had condemned, and submit to an Authority that the Church had rejected; according to M. de Meaux his Principle, the People must never take upon them to judg after the Church, nor admit any Opinion but hers. If they do, 'tis a most unconceivable Pride, 'tis giving an occasion of horrible Consequences, of hideous and detestable Tenets. How then could that People, this Principle still remaining inviolate, believe that there was a full demonstration of the power of God in Jesus Christ's Miracles, or any

evident confirmation of his being sent from God; and upon this belief embrace and own his Authority; that is, in plain terms, act in direct contradiction to the Judgment of their Church? This is the knotty point, which M. de Meaux his Answer gives no solution at all of. And in short, it cannot be answered, but by reconciling this Bishops principle, with the behaviour of those Jews that were converted to Jesus Christ, and making it appear, that this Conversion of theirs was perfectly consistent with this Principle. This is what I expect M. de Meaux should make out, but what he never will be able to do.

But this is not all; for it is plain, that his answer does really make for our Cause, as I said before, and against this Prelates own. Here we have an Assembly as to the form of it unexceptionable, which nevertheless out of a plain and a palpable Malice and obstinacy, falls into the most criminal fundamental Error in the World.

Here we have likewise a People and private persons, who, notwithstanding the judgment and determination of that Assembly, are wrought upon by the Evidence of Jesus Christ's Miracles, and venture to believe their own apprehensions, which suggest to them that these Miracles are Divine. These men do not only judge after the Synagogue, but expressly contrary to it; they disengage themselves from it; and to use M. de Meaux his own Phrase, prefer themselves before it, and do of their own heads acknowledg Jesus Christ, and submit to him. Those Assemblies then are not infallible, whatever form or order may be observed in them; malice and obstinacy may blind them, their Authority is not so absolute, and full, as never to be opposed; their decisions are subject to Examination, and every Believer is allowed without being presently guilty of Pride or Presumption, to think, that in some certain cases he may understand God's Word better than all, even the most Universal Assemblies. It signifies nothing to alledge what M. de Meaux somewhere does, *That the very Moment of the Synagogues fall was clearly markt out by the Scriptures and the Prophets.* For what does this but strengthen my Assertion, and give me an opportunity of asserting still more vehemently, that these Ecclesiastical Assemblies may fall, since the Scriptures and the Prophets had *clearly markt out* the fall of such Assemblies in the Synagogue?

The Consequence will be, That every particular person keeping in prospect this fall, as a thing which not only might, but would certainly come to pass, was obliged to examine, and not pay an unconditional obedience. It was not then at that time any Equivocation, any Illusion, or mental Reservation, to have a Condition understood. Every man was then obliged to believe, that he might understand the Word of God better than the most Universal Assembly, and all the rest of the Church

Church together. It was neither an argument of pride or rashness to believe so, nor was this any hideous, or detestable Tenet. But this, you will say, could never happen but once. In the first place, 'tis absurd to restrain such an accident to one time, since there are so many other instances of the Synagogues having prevaricated. But granting it never to have happened but once; I say, that even this were enough to oblige Believers to keep their Eyes open, that so they might not be surpris'd when this one instance should happen; and besides, that my conclusions will still be good and strong; for a thing that is at any one time just, and pious, and commendable, cannot be in its own nature either hideous, or detestable, or full of pride and rashness.

Further; If it were lawful and just to judg after the Synagogue, without incurring the inconveniences mentioned by M. de Meaux, upon this supposition, that it should at some one time fall into Error; it will be every whit as just and lawful for us to judge always after the Assemblies of the *Latin Church*, without incurring the same inconveniences: Because we do it only upon this supposition, that those Assemblies are no time infallible, but that they may at any time wander out of the right way. Upon this principle it is, that we ground our right and our obligation to judge after them. Whether this principle be true or false, is a distinct question, which M. de Meaux may discourse upon when he thinks fit; but if you suppose the Principle the Consequence cannot be disputed; the instance of those who lived under the Synagogue, and examined after it for that reason, because it was to fall, will justify that. M. de Meaux therefore should have begun with the proof of the *Latin Assemblies* being infallible first, and when that point had been gained, he might have been allowed to declaim against the inconveniences that would follow, by mens undertaking to examine after infallible Guides. But till then, we have a common right, which, by supposing those Assemblies liable to mistakes, does upon this very account oblige every man to examine after them: And for as much as a thing of common right cannot become evil, unless it be by virtue of some particular exception, which makes the practice of the thing irregular, it will lye upon M. de Meaux to prove, not the Infallibility of those *Latin Assemblies* by his pretended inconveniences, but quite contrary, his pretended inconveniences by the Infallibility of the *Latin Assemblies*; because they cannot take place nor are any objection against us, except by virtue of some privilegedg peculiar to those Assemblies.

There was then, says Monsieur de Meaux, a visible and palpable Authority, Eng Re-
to which every one ought to submit without examining; so that there was never flect. p. 70.
any time, when men were less exposed to the temptation of Pride, by elevating
them-

themselves above all living and speaking Authority; since Jesus Christ, the most living, and most speaking, as well as the greatest, and most infallible that ever was, was then on the Earth, and that they preferred not themselves before the Synagogue, but by submitting to Jesus Christ, whose miracles, as himself said, took away all excuse from those that believed not in him. I say again, that this is clearly advancing our Cause, and overthrowing his own. First then, It may so happen, that Ecclesiastical Assemblies may be in a state of real and formal opposition against the supreme Authority of Jesus Christ.

Eng. Conf.
p. 31.

For if this happened even at such a time, when Jesus Christ was upon Earth in person, when his Authority was a living, and speaking, a visible and palpable Authority; when it was confirmed too by the most convincing Miracles; It is much more reasonable to suppose the same may happen now, since Jesus Christ hath left the Earth, since that his Miracles have ceased, and that he speaks to us only by his Scriptures, which M. de Meaux calls, *A word that suffers it self to be explicated and managed how one will, and makes no Reply to those that misunderstand it.* If God suffered once the whole visible Church, to speak in M. de Meaux his stile, the only visible Church at that time in the World, to fall into so plain and palpable malice and obstinacy, as to question the truth of our Saviour's Miracles, although they carried along with them a full demonstration of his Divine Power, and so evident a confirmation of his being sent from God, that every reasonable man was obliged to yield to it, without any further enquiry; If he did, I say, then suffer a blindness, so contrary, not only to the light of his Holy Spirit, but even to that of Reason too, thereby to give us an eminent instance of the weakness and corruption of Man; How can we be sure of other Assemblies, who are nothing near in such advantageous Circumstances? Secondly, If this happened even then, when Jesus Christ was come down upon Earth, it is from hence evident, his pleasure was, that the Faith of his first Disciples should not have any dependence upon the Churches Authority, and consequently, that he was pleased to make himself own'd and received in the World, by disannulling this pretended Authority of such Assemblies. It is from hence also evident, that the Spirit which made the first Christians, effected this by opening the eyes of each particular person, and bringing them to such an acknowledgment of his being the true *Messiah*, as proceeded purely and immediately from themselves. Now this is to confess, in one word, that the Christian Religion owes its birth, not to Monsieur de Meaux's Principle, which would have smothered it in its very Cradle, but to the *Protestants* Principle; and that it is by this means that it came to light. And need any more be said then, to confound all the black and odious Representations which M. de Meaux would fix upon

upon us for this, and to convince us on the contrary, that this is a holy and a just principle, since Jesus Christ himself made use of it for the establishment of his Gospel? Lastly, Being it was not at all ill done of those *Jews*, to prefer themselves before the Synagogue for the submitting to Jesus Christ, when he was a living and speaking Authority, and such a one as was confirmed by Miracles; neither will it be ill done in men to prefer themselves before Ecclesiastical Assemblies, provided this be done in order to submitting to Jesus Christ, living and speaking to us in his Scriptures, which we acknowledg to be Divine, and not to stand in any need of a new confirmation by Miracles. The reason why men were obliged at that time to submit to him; was not merely because his person appeared upon Earth, but because his Authority was Divine, and above all. Now this Authority is not less Divine, or less supreme, at this day in his Scriptures; therefore it still requires of us at this day the like submission; and that we should, as they did then, prefer it before the Authority of all Assemblies whatever, when it happens that these two clath with one another. And since there is not in nature any impossibility but this may happen, and we cannot at any time be sure that it shall not happen; we are for this reason under a perpetual obligation to examine the decisions of such Assemblies.

The third thing remarkable in M. de Meaux his Answer is, that he draws a most wretched consequence from my way of arguing, thereby to contrive a Topick of accusation against me. Mr. Claude, says he, *must also say, that because Jesus Christ's Miracles were rejected as deceitful signs, by the envious, by the obstinate, in one word, by the declared enemies of the Truth; These Miracles were not convincing enough to oblige men to believe Jesus Christ on his word, without examining farther; and that for example, after he had raised Lazarus in express Testimony that God had sent him, those who beheld with their Eyes so great a Miracle, were, I do not say permitted, but expressly obliged to examine, whether Jesus Christ was sent by God.* Eag Re-
flect p 69,
70.

I say, that this Consequence could not possibly have been worse contrived; for it must of necessity either be no consequence at all, or if it be, it must fall upon M. de Meaux himself, because as I observed before, my Argument proceeds purely upon his Principle. The Synagogue declare their opinion, that Jesus Christ's Miracles are wrought by Beelzebub, this is a matter of fact which the Gospel informs us of. The people ought not to interpose their Judgment after the Synagogue have declared theirs; this is M. de Meaux's principle applied to the Jewish Church. From thence I infer, that according to him, the people could not look upon Jesus Christ's Miracles to be any better than false and deceitful signs, such as Moses had formerly warned the *Israelites* to beware of,

of; and that, because this was the opinion of their Church, to which, according to him, they owed a blind implicit obedience. If it follow from this Argument, that Jesus Christ's Miracles were not convincing enough to oblige men to believe him upon his word, without examining further, this must follow from his Principle, and not from mine. When my Principle is concerned, I shall argue quite contrary from it; for I shall say, the people were bound to examine the Synagogues decisions, and judge in a manner different from them, when they have judged amiss. But they did judge amiss of the Miracles wrought by Christ, when they rejected and condemned them, And therefore the people were obliged to receive and own them, and at the same time to submit to that Divine and Infallible Authority of Jesus Christ, which these Miracles did establish and confirm. Thus M. de Meaux his Consequence does nothing else but justify me, and accuse himself.

But the truth of the matter is, this pretended Consequence does not follow either from his Principle or mine. The Question in agitation betwixt us, concerns that examination which people ought, or ought not to make upon the decisions of Assemblies. Allow my Principle, and it is plain the people were obliged to look upon the Synagogues condemning Jesus Christ's Miracles, and Authority, as a rash, sacrilegious, and ungodly action, such as could proceed from nothing but malice and passion, because his Miracles carried such visible, illustrious, and evident marks of their being wrought by a Divine Power. The natural Consequence is indeed, that the people ought to examine that decision of the Synagogue; but that, notwithstanding the conviction of our Saviour's Miracles, they were obliged to examine over again after him; and not believe him upon his word, is a consequence that no Man can charge upon my Principle without perfect dotage. Allow M. de Meaux's Principle, and it is clear, the people ought to receive the Synagogues decision against Christ and his Miracles implicitly, and consequently that they might not examine them any further. It is not easy now to apprehend from whence it is that M. de Meaux fetches his pretended consequence, which hath no manner of connexion, either with his Principle, or mine.

Eng. Reflect p 69. Mr. Claude, says he, in his Relation says, That the Miracles of Jesus Christ made one of the matters in Question, That there were false Miracles, which Moses in Deuteronomy advis'd the Israelites to take heed of; That the Synagogue had judg'd Jesus Christ's Miracles to be done in the name of Beelzebub. Have I said any thing in all this that is not true and plain matter of fact? Or can M. de Meaux disown it? Had not the Synagogue pass'd such a judgment? And is not the passage of Moses in Deuteronomy, as I have related it? But did I ever tell him, that in my opinion, the Synagogue was in the

the right to do what they did? or that I thought they could with any justice apply that passage of *Deuteronomy* to Jesus Christ's Miracles, which yet in all probability they made use of as a pretence for their proceedings? Not any thing like it. To what purpose then does he charge me with an opinion, that men ought to examine even after Jesus Christ?

But, may some object, if you neither approve the Synagogues proceedings, nor their application of that passage in *Moses* to Christ's Miracles, wherefore do you mention it? Or what advantage can you think to gain from it? I answer, that there are three reasons why I made use of it: The first was, to shew M. de Meaux that admitting his Principle, it was impossible the people should ever have received Jesus Christ's authority, or acknowledged the Divine Power of his Miracles, and consequently, that what he told us, of there being then a visible and speaking Authority, which was Jesus Christ's, confirmed by Miracles, signified nothing; for, according to his principle, it was become utterly invalid and null. The Synagogue had called it in question, they had taken occasion to do so from that passage in *Deuteronomy*, they had condemned that and his Miracles; Wickedly and maliciously, it is true; but still they had done it: And when it was once done, M. de Meaux his Principle would not allow the people to examine this action, that so they might discern the wickedness of it; but they must pay a blind obedience to it. This Principle therefore rendred both the Miracles and Authority of Christ void, and of no effect; and from thence I inferred, that it was a very ill principle, and destructive of the Christian Religion.

My second Reason was, because in the Communion of the Church of Rome, these following propositions are generally held for true and Orthodox. *That it is a right belonging to the Church, to judge of the nature of Miracles; That, when the Church hath judged of them, the people may not, upon any pretence whatsoever, act in opposition to her judgment, but is bound to acquiesce in it; That, whensoever upon any point of Doctrine, Miracles appear on one side, and the Church's Authority on the contrary part, men must renounce the Miracles, and keep themselves close to the Church and its Authority.* Thus much Father Annat a Jesuit, and Confessor to His Majesty, hath taught us, in a passage related by me in my Defence of the Reformation, and which I think not amiss to repeat here. *The applying (says he) and directing of a Miracle, to prove the truth of a Doctrine that is condemned, is an undertaking so rash and scandalous, that it deserves to be punished. There is never a Catholick in the World, that hath learnt his Creed, and understands it, who can be wrought into such a persuasion. What? If the appearance of a Miracle shall be set in opposition to the Churches determinations, can any Man be*

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contre
Miracle
du Port
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at a stand, or so much as doubt, whether it be better to disclaim a Church that depends upon the truth of a Miracle, or deny the truth of a Miracle that relies upon the authority of the Church? St. Peter hath instructed us long ago, what course we should take upon such an occasion. He himself had been an Eye-witness of our Saviour's transfiguration, and the glory that he concealed under the veil of his passible and mortal state, and yet he lays more stress upon obscure Prophecies, than upon the clear and express testimony of his own Eyes. *Habemus firmiorem propheticum Sermonem; We have a more sure word of Prophecy. The Churches Authority, which is in no respect less than that of the Prophets, dashes in pieces all the reasons that would shock it, and we must alledg for our selves in the Churches behalf, what St. Peter adds in behalf of the Prophets, Cui bene facitis attendentes, to which you do do well to take heed; employing all our attention and care, to understand what are really the Churches Opinions, and taking it off from all such Miracles, and Arguments, as are offered to us, with a design of calling in question what we know the Church hath determined. Who does not plainly perceive, that, according to these Maxims, the Synagogue had full right and power, not only to take cognisance of Jesus Christ's Miracles, but to condemn them too, because they did evidently oppose their sentence of Condemnation, past upon our Saviour's Authority; and, according to the same Tenets, the people would have become guilty of a rash, scandalous Action, and such as deserved to be punished, when they opposed his Miracles to the Synagogues determination. It was therefore much to the purpose to shew that Monsieur de Meaux does but trifle with us, when he alledges Jesus Christ's visible and speaking Authority, because at the same time he maintains a Principle, which, in the latitude the Church of Rome allows it, does utterly overthrow this Authority.*

My third Reason was, that I was desirous to reduce M. de Meaux to one of these two streights, either to deny that a Man may renounce the Churches Authority, when he hath the testimony of his own eyes to the contrary; or to confess it. Now by good fortune he has confess'd it, for all the certainty the people had of Jesus Christ's Miracles, was only from the testimony of their own eyes, and yet, according to his Argument, this was convincing enough to warrant their going contrary to the Synagogue. He may be pleas'd to consider what the meaning of this is, and what conclusions I ought to draw from it, in the business of the Eucharist.

Eng. Reflections. p. 69.

But, *In fine*, says this Prelate, Mr. Claude affirms, that an Authority decides nothing, till it be first received, and that Jesus Christ's was not so as yet, since 'twas in dispute whether they should receive it or reject it. What have I said in this which common sense does not tell us, and which M. de Meaux him-

himself did not say upon the business of the *Bereans*, who examined what *St. Paul* taught by the Rule of Scripture? He answers, they had right to make such Examination, *as not being in the Church, and so having as yet no Authority to regulate them.* I meddle not now with the poorness of that Answer, as if those *Bereans* had not had among them the Synagogues Authority, which was their natural Church. It is enough for me, that *M. de Meaux* hath himself confess'd the truth of my assertion, *That an Authority can decide nothing till it be first received.* Now this is what his own Principle, had it been followed, would certainly have obstructed, I mean, They could not receive this any other way, than by following their own understandings, and determining by a private and personal judgment, that his Miracles were of God, quite contrary to what their Church had determined. And this *M. de Meaux* his Principle, had it been retained, and observed, could never have suffered them to do.

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p. 33.

Thus my Argument stands still firm and immovable, That the Doctrine which this Prelate vindicates and asserts, is a justification of those who refused to believe in *Jesus Christ*; that it condemns those who did believe in him, that it utterly disannulls the living and speaking Authority of this Divine Saviour, tho it pretends to advance and establish it; and lastly, that it overthrows, and strikes at the very root of the Christian Religion. Let *M. de Meaux* now consider, whether it be worth maintaining upon these terms.

The five following Reflections Examined, wherein M. de Meaux treats of his second Consequence, That there is, according to our Tenet, a point of Time, in which a Christian is obliged to doubt, whether the Scripture be inspired by God; whether the Gospel be a Truth, or a Fable; whether Jesus Christ be a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth.

M. de Meaux in the account he gives of *Mademoiselle de Duras* her Conversion, tells us, *That as soon as she had heard this to be one of the constant Maxims of her Religion, That every private person, how ignorant soever, was obliged to believe, That he could understand the Holy Scripture better than all the Councils, and all the rest of the Church together, she seem'd astonished at this Proposition; But, says he, I added, That there was yet believed in her Religion, something far more strange, which was, That there is a point of time, when a Christian is obliged to doubt, whether the Scripture was inspired*

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p. 15.

by God ; whether the Gospel is a Truth, or a Fable ; whether Jesus Christ was a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth.

Considering how mighty and advantageous a secret it is, in order to proseliting people, to be well skilled in working the World up to an astonishment in proper time and place, it cannot be thought strange that M. de Meaux should have tried the Expedient upon this occasion. He was so wrapt with joy, to see the good success of a former Phantome, that he thought the addition of a second very necessary, to a Lady but slenderly instructed, and already under strong preingagements ; that so he might heighten in her mind an astonishment very assisting to his design. By his favour, he must not take it ill, that I give his pretended Consequences no better a term than Phantomes. I have very good ground for calling them so, because like Phantomes they are concealed by the help of darkness, I mean his ambiguous and equivocating expressions ; and like Phantomes too, tho they have no real substance or solidity, yet they have a very frightful figure. This we have seen already to be true of the first, by the examination we took it into ; and we may be pretty confident that this other will be found to be of no better Character than that. That we may judge of it with some exactness, let us first take notice of the terms it is couched in : *There is*, says this Prelate, *a Point* ; Who would not think this some point of Doctrine, or of History, or some Command, or some Promise, or some Threatning, or some Prediction, or, in one word, some point of Religion ? *A Point*, proceeds he, *in which a Christian*, Who would not imagine this to mean every Christian indifferently, without any distinction or degree, or of quality ? *In which a Christian is obliged*, Who would not take this for an obligation of duty, and such as a Man must necessarily discharge in point of Conscience, and upon penalty of damnation ? *Obliged to doubt* ; Who might not from hence fancy, that this argued there were Reasons on both sides, and Reasons too almost of equal weight, such as keep a Christians mind in a perfect suspense, and hinder him from inclining to either side of the Question, whether the Scripture was inspired by God ? Whether the Gospel be a Truth, or a Fable ? Whether Jesus Christ be a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth ? Was there ever a more frightful form seen ? There is a *point* of Christianity, in which, according to the Religion of *Protestants*, if a Christian will discharge his duty conscientiously, and not be guilty of a mortal sin, he is obliged to doubt whether the Scripture be inspired by God ; whether the Gospel be a Truth or a Fable : whether Jesus Christ be a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth. Here indeed, you may see a thing as able as any thing can be to put any one into a terrible fright, that is not acquainted with M. de Meaux's way of expressing himself.

But

The French is *il-y-a-un Point*, the words of *Time*, are added by the Translator all along, so that the Original has an Ambiguity, which the English has not.

But let us not part with our Courage upon such easy Terms, let us see how much of reality there is under this figure, and to that purpose look into this Prelates Proposition, as he himself hath restrained, and lessened it. And first of all; this *Point* in dispute, is no point of Religion, but only a *Point of Time*. Thus much himself hath given us to understand in his Third Reflection, *I assigned*, says he, *for this Point of Doubt, all the time, in which a Christian, for what cause soever, hath not read the Scripture*. This point then is not any fixed thing, or of constant continuance; it is only a certain time, which is presently over the time; in which a Christian hath not as yet read the Scripture, nor is at all instructed in the Doctrines of Christianity; the time in which he hath not yet heard any mention of them. In the Second place, *the Christian here*, is not any Christian whatever, nor advanced to any pitch of Faith tho' never so high; it is a *Baptised* person, who hath no more Christianity, than meerly what the Sacrament can confer upon him, who may possibly have received the Holy Ghost, and Faith infused; but one, who of himself hath not yet arrived at any actual knowledge of the Mysteries of Religion; M. de Meaux supposes it, *'Tis a Baptised Christian, who hath neither read the Holy Scripture, nor heard it read. The debate between us is in general, concerning all those that have not read the Holy Scriptures, of what Age soever they be, and what way soever they may have hapned not to have read it*. It is not therefore a perfect compleat Christian, he is only so by that Title which his Birth and Baptism, and if you please, Faith infused have given him. As for the Obligation in dispute, it is no Obligation of Duty; 'tis no more than a *certain Condition* in which according to our Tenets, men cannot make an Act of Faith upon the Scripture, because they never yet read it, or heard it read. M. de Meaux tells us his meaning of it after this manner, *The Second Inconvenience*, says he, *is, that there is a time, when a Baptised Christian is not in Condition to make an Act of Faith upon the Holy Scripture; but that, whether he will or no, he shall find himself obliged to doubt, whether it be inspired by God*. This Obligation then is but a condition of weakness and involuntary impotency, which cannot in any sense be termed a duty, since on the contrary it is what men ought to lament, and groan under, and in proportion as they can bring themselves to be sensible of it, and must endeavour withal imaginable speed to get out of that state. Lastly, As to what concerns this *Doubt*, we must by no means fancy it to be either a suspense, nor a wavering of the mind betwixt Affirmative and Negative, occasioned by such weighty Reasons on both sides, as keep the judgment equally balanced, and sometimes incline it to favour the Affirmative part, sometimes the Negative, which is yet what men usually call a Doubting: M. de Meaux acknowledges that

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it is not so to be understood, and that his meaning by it is barely this, Not knowing whether a thing be or no. *To doubt*, says he, *is not to know whether a thing be or not; the Christian of whom we speak, knows not whether the Scripture be true or not. He is then in Doubt. Tell me what it is to doubt, but not to know, whether a thing be or no?* And thus all the Proposition, which M. de Meaux lays to our charge, when it is once stript of its disguise, and put into intelligible terms, according to the explanation he himself gives it, comes but to this, that there is a certain time; in which a Baptised person, but one who hath not any more Christianity than Baptism, and at the most Faith infused, and who hath not as yet read, nor heard the Scripture, or that it is inspired by God, cannot make any Act of Divine Faith upon it, because he hath not hitherto any knowledge of it of himself; and this, according to him, ought to be termed a state of doubting. And thus you see the mighty Mystery which M. de Meaux dress up in these expressions, *That there is a Point, in which, according to them, a Christian is obliged to doubt, whether the Scripture is inspired by God; whether the Gospel be a Truth or a Fable; whether Jesus Christ be a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth.* If I may not be allowed to call this a Phantome, I do not see what other name can well be given it.

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Let us now, I pray you, lay aside all these great odious words, and hideous representations, under which this Prelate hath been pleased to expose this pretended Consequence to view, and consider in cool Blood, what part of that which remains ought to be own'd for ours, and what ought to be rejected and disclaimed by us. We will own then for ours, this *Child*, or this *Person* of what Age soever M. de Meaux shall please to suppose him. I say of what Age soever he supposes him; for it is to no purpose for him to complain, *That Mr. Claude affects to reduce this dispute to the Instruction of Children.* 'Tis a thing I do not at all think of. In the Conference indeed, Children only were spoken of, but the reason of this was, that M. de Meaux confined himself to them of his own accord, and I had no right to stretch his Argument beyond the terms he delivered it in. However whenever he shall be desirous, that the debate betwixt us may be in general concerning all those who have not read the Holy Scriptures, what Age soever he supposes them to be of, though it were as old as *Methusalem*, he shall never find me oppose him in it; provided he agree withal, as in justice he must, that there be a constant regard had to such differences as that Age may in all probability make in the Case. M. de Meaux, and I shall never quarrel about that; and therefore his Sixth Reflection, which consists of nothing else but this unjust complaint, was perfectly useless and superfluous. Neither shall the Title of *Christian*

stian, which he gives to this baptis'd Person, make any difference be-
 twixt us, if he will but agree to these Two conditions, which I look
 upon to be very reasonable and just. The First is, That he will not abuse
 that name as he has done; and the other, that he will not lay down false
 suppositions from it, and such as are contrary to right reason. 'Tis a
 plain abuse of this name, to make use of it for the bringing in strange
 exaggerations, which are good for nothing but to catch and amuse
 the Populacy: *It is an horrible thing, says he, that a Baptis'd Christian at the*
Age of Reason cannot make upon the Scripture an Act of that Faith, by which we
are Christians. Good Sir spare your Rhetorick. This man is a Christi-
 an, but in what sence? He is so upon the Title given him by his
 Birth and Baptism; but he is not so yet by a Faith that can exert it
 self in Acts; because one thing which is naturally and absolutely re-
 quisite in order to reduce Faith into Act, hath hitherto been wanting
 to him. An Act of Faith does naturally, and of necessity suppose the
 objects of Faith present to the mind. *How shall they believe, says*
St. Paul, in him of whom they have not heard? Faith cometh by hearing, and
hearing by the Word of God. This person concerned in our present Ar-
 gument, hath not as yet received any information concerning Religion,
 or the Scripture; he is not therefore in a Condition of making the Act
 of Faith we speak of. If this information be wanting upon the ac-
 count of his own carelessness, the fault is his; if it be so through the
 default of another, or the incapacity of his Age, he is not to be blamed
 for it. But by what means soever this hath happened, he is not yet ar-
 rived at the perfection of being a formal Christian. And is not this
 now a pretty odd sort of *horror*, that M. de Meaux has found to com-
 plain of, that a Baptis'd person, and one who is no further a Christian
 than his Birth and Baptism can entitle him to that name, cannot make
 an Act of that Faith by which we are Christians, when the objects,
 without which it is in nature impossible to make such an Act, were ne-
 ver yet presented to his mind? 'Tis, as if I should count it a horrible
 thing, that a Child, come to be a man, who is endued with reason,
 and the faculty of understanding, cannot exert this in an Act of that
 understanding and reason by which we are men, at a time when that
 which is in nature necessary to produce such an Act, is wanting to
 him. Why should a man lose his time upon such Objections as these?

This then is manifestly to abuse the Title of Christian given to the
 man of whom we now speak, and it is but just that M. de Meaux should
 correct the abuse. But it is also as just, that he should cease from mak-
 ing unreasonable suppositions upon the same Title. Such a one I call
 that which he makes in his Sixth Reflection, *That the debate between us*

is concerning all those that have not read the Scripture, of what Age soever they be, and what way soever they may have happened not to have read it. If these men be come to a great Age, and when they had opportunities of reading the Scripture, would not do it, out of a Principle of Irreligion, neglect of their Salvation, or because they had given themselves up to all manner of wickedness, does he think it a reasonable thing to look upon these men as Christians in Covenant, and Mystical Communion with God, merely because they have been Baptized? This is what I shall never allow him; and, in my opinion, men ought to make their suppositions a little more cautiously and sparingly. Birth and Baptism confer upon a man the Title of Christian; but this is upon condition, and with a Presumption, that when such a one shall come at years of discretion, he shall act agreeably to that great Title, otherwise it will prove no better than an empty name, and only aggravate a man's condemnation.

As for that *Faith infused*, which M. de Meaux would have us suppose in this Baptized Christian. It is not any received Doctrine among the *Protestants*, that such Faith is given to all that are admitted Baptism. How many People are there who receive the Sacrament of men's hands, but nothing at all of God's Grace? 'Tis a Question disputed, as a Theological doubt in our Schools, Whether God impart that to any, before they attain to years of Reason? and each man is allowed to follow which part of the Question he thinks most probable. Yet I am content, M. de Meaux should suppose it, provided he do not suppose it also of men that are of a riper Age. These two suppositions would clash with one another, there being no probability that God should bestow a Principle of Spiritual Life, such as the Holy Spirit, and Faith infused is, to lye a long time idle within a man, and not produce in him any act of Faith, when the proper Objects thereof were presented to him. A great many Baptized persons may be observed to pass the greatest part of their time in an utter unconcernedness for Religion, in blindness, and heinous sin, and never come to conversion, till the conclusion of their lives. Can we suppose that these men did at their Baptism receive Faith infused, and that they retained it during all the time of their impenitence? This cannot in justice be supposed, and I am mightily mistaken, if M. de Meaux find many *Protestants* that will own such a Doctrine. If therefore this Prelate will needs make *Faith infused*, a part of his supposition, he must restrain it to some Children; such I mean, as when they come to years, and the use of Reason, do reduce this Faith into Acts, as the proper Objects of it offer themselves. With this restriction I am very well pleased to let the supposition go, not that I tell him I acknowledge and own it, as he makes me say in the Conference, by an excess of

of Freedom, which I never thought of; but meerly, that I may not keep too far off from the main Controversy, and because I would shew my self complaisant to him.

These are the limitations, and explanations, upon which *M. de Meaux* and I may be brought to an agreement, in the terms of his supposition. A Baptised person, a Christian by virtue of his Baptism, come to the Age of Reason, who may have received the Holy Spirit and Faith infused, and who hath not yet read the Holy Scripture. Now our Business is to know, what judgment from hence can be made of our Principle, which denies that the Church hath an Infallible Authority. *Thence it follows*, says *M. de Meaux*, *that a Christian at his first going to read the Holy Scripture, ought neither to be inclined of himself, or induced by any other to say at opening it, I believe, as I believe that God is, that the Scripture I am going to read, is his Word.* *M. de Meaux* fancies whatever he hath a mind; it is not true that this follows from thence. The Scripture must be considered in Two different respects, either in respect of the matter of it; that is, of the Truths it contains; or in respect of the Form of it; that is, the manner how it contains them, so far forth as it is a Book, or a Writing. The method most in use among Christians, is to begin to teach People the matter of the Scripture, in things which are called Catechisms, wherein the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Doctrine of the Sacraments are explained: Thus before a man advances so far, as to reading the Bible, it is plain he hath already made Acts of Divine Faith upon the Principal and most Essential matters of Religion, and, without any recourse to the Churches Authority, which may hitherto be utterly unknown to him, is in a condition to say, *I believe, as I believe that God is, that the things I am assured are contained in this Book, as in the source and fountain from whence they are derived, are the Word of God.* Now who makes any Question, but this is a true Act of Faith upon the Scriptures Divine Authority; not with respect to its form, as it is Scripture, *i.e.* a Writing; but in regard of its matter, and that which it contains? And this is sufficient to make a man actually a true Believer, and consequently to put him into a state of Salvation.

M. de Meaux will reply, That thus much at least follows from it, That this Christian, cannot make an Act of Divine Faith upon the Scripture, formally considered as Scripture; and this was evidently his meaning when he said, *This Proposition was an horrible thing.* I grant it. But, I say withal, that if this Prelate make his pretended horror to consist in that, he must account what he himself hath taught, horrible too. *Mr. Claude*, says he, *is not ignorant, that there were in the beginning of Christianity, not only particular men, but also whole Nations, which according to the report of*

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St. Irenæus, had not the Holy Scripture, and without it, ceased not to be true Christians. These whole Nations had not the Holy Scripture, they had not read it as yet, The Church had not as yet delivered it to them, they therefore as yet neither had made, nor were in any capacity of making this Act of Faith, *I believe, as I believe that God is, that this Scripture which I am going to read, is his Word.* Notwithstanding all which, according to M. de Meaux, these very men ceased not be true Christians. Men may therefore be true Christians without making this Act; and it is no horrible thing at all to suppose there are some Christians, who cannot yet make it, provided they believe the matter contained in Scripture with a Divine Faith. Or, if there be really any horror in the thing, it is Monsieur de Meaux himself, who after St. Irenæus hath delivered this horrible Proposition to us. If this Prelate shall think to bring himself off by saying, That however, those men by virtue of that Faith they had in the Church, were perfectly disposed, and in a readiness to make that Act of Faith upon the Scripture, as soon as ever the Church should offer it to them; I will say as much of these men we now dispute about; to wit, That by virtue of that Faith infus'd, which is attributed to them, and of the Acts of Faith already made by them upon the matter of the Scripture, they are likewise in a disposition, and perfect readiness to make that other Act upon the Scripture it self, as soon as they shall be capable of reading it.

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Reflect.
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What Mr. Claude says concerning the Scripture, proceeds Mr. de Meaux, *the same he must say on the Faith of the Trinity, on that of the Incarnation, on that of Jesus Christ's Mission, and the Redemption of Mankind.* For that which forces Mr. Claude, and every Protestant to say, *That the Believer who has not read the Holy Scripture, can believe it only with a humane Faith to be inspired by God, is, That otherwise they must acknowledge an Act of Divine Faith on the Churches sole Authority, which would be to own this Authority as infallible, and Mine the very Foundations of all the new Reformation.* But the same Argument returns upon all the Articles of our Faith; and if the Faithful can believe with a Divine Faith, both the Trinity and the Incarnation, and Mission of Jesus Christ on the sole Authority of the Church, and before he has read the Holy Scripture, I shall always conclude with equal Certainty, *That the Churches Authority will be infallible.* By the Consequence of Mr. Clandes, and all the Protestants Principles, we must in reducing the Christians who go to read the Holy Scripture to a bare humane Faith concerning this Scripture, reduce them at the same time to the like, on the most Essential Articles of our belief.

I must confess I do not very well comprehend the strength of this Prelates argument, and either his Ideas must certainly be not clear, or else mine are most wretchedly confused. A Christian, that has not read the Scripture, cannot believe it to be inspired by God with any more than a human Faith, otherwise there will be a necessity of acknowledg-

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ing an Act of Divine Faith, upon the Churches sole Authority. Therefore this person cannot believe the Trinity, the Incarnation, or Mission of Jesus Christ with a Divine Faith, before he hath read the Scripture, except he believe them upon the Churches Authority. This is all that I can find in the Argument. But what consequence is there from one of these Two things to the other? If he had said, Therefore he cannot believe these Articles with a Divine Faith, before he hath had some knowledg of them, and considered them, otherwise he must necessarily have believed them upon the Churches Authority; the argument had been good, and I should have been of the same opinion with him. But to say, Therefore this Christian cannot believe these Articles with a Divine Faith, before he hath read the Scripture, except he believe them upon the Churches Authority, is a Proposition that hath no manner of connexion with that which went before, and depends upon it no otherwise, than because it is M. de Meaux his pleasure it should do so. The Articles of the Christian Religion, whether we consider them as written, or not written, are always Divine, their own nature gives them this pre-eminence; and so carrying along with them the marks of their being such, make an easy impressiion upon mens Consciences, provided we suppose a Conscience rectified by the Holy Spirit, (as in this dispute we do all along) or Faith infused. Thus, whatever M. de Meaux says of the matter, before ever a man have read the Scripture, or made any act of Divine Faith upon it formally considered, so as to acknowledg this Book inspired by God, he may have made several such Acts upon the Mysteries of Religion, without any regard to the Churches Authority. 'Tis to no purpose for the Prelate to cry out, *That this overthrows the whole Order of Instruction; that it is to lose the fruit of Baptism, and reduce Christians to instruct their Baptised Children, as if they were not so, and that they were yet to deliberate of what Religion they should be.* There is not the least ground for this Discourse, no more than for what he adds afterwards, *That it is to introduce Anabaptism.* We Baptize our Children, without expecting their coming into a Condition to make an Act of Divine Faith in their own persons, because they are Christians from their Birth, by virtue of that Clause in God's Covenant, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed after thee*; from whence it follows, that they cannot in justice be denied the Sacrament. By this Clause, our Children are distinguished from such as are born of unbelieving Parents, and do belong to God. But, being all this is with a Condition, that, when they shall come to years of discretion, they will be Believers, and that their present weakness makes them incapable of entring into so solemn an engagement themselves, God requires this Condition of their Fathers, who offer them to be Baptised; and the Fathers promise

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Refl p 75.

Gen. 17 7.

mise thus much for their Children, by virtue of the power Nature gives them to treat in their names, and the right of Education she hath invested them with. Upon this account it is, that Infants are Baptized upon a reasonable hope, that they will one day be Believers, and ratifie, and faithfully perform themselves the promise made in their stead by their Fathers. In pursuance of this First engagement, the Fathers apply themselves to teaching their Children, and at their entrance upon it, upon a supposal that God will be pleased to bless their pains, and send the Grace of his Holy Spirit along with their words, they endeavour to form, or to excite in their tender minds, the first Ideas of a Deity; and imprint there sentiments of honour, love, and fear of the same. Afterwards they explain to them the first Elements of Christian Religion, and, as they become capable of it, cause them to observe its worth and excellence. When this is done, they bring them to publick Congregations of the Church, that there they may receive more full, more particular, and more extensive instruction from the mouth of their Ministers. At length they set them to read the Holy Scripture, supplying them with such helps, as are esteemed necessary for their understanding. By these means, Faith is by little and little formed in their hearts, and they are insensibly advanced to this last and highest Act of Divine Faith, of acknowledging the Scripture to be a Book inspired by God. What is there now in all this, that overthrows the Order of Instruction, or that makes them lose the fruit of Baptism, or reduces Christians to instruct their Baptized Children, as if they were not so, or that favours Anabaptism? Baptism engages the Fathers to labour diligently in instructing their Children, it likewise obliges Children to be ready and disposed to learn of their Fathers; they begin this instruction with such things as are the most needful, and the most easy to be known; from the instruction given at home they proceed to that given by the Ministers of the Church; and at last they pass to the Scripture it self. And what better method than this can possibly be thought on?

Prejug.
Leg.

A man might find it something difficult to comprehend, which way young people, in whom there may still be observed a great deal of weakness in the use they make of their reason, are capable of an Act of Divine Faith, as well in regard of the Mysteries of Religion, as of Scripture. It is an Objection made to us every day. They tell us of *Tradesmen, of Labourers, of Souldiers, of Women, and of Children; who have all of them a weak judgment still.* They represent to us, *That they are overwhelmed with a Thousand cares, and necessary businesses of the World, which do almost wholly take them up, and allow them but very little time to employ in examining the Truths that concern Religion.* They tell us, *That the greatest part of men are destitute of such advantages, as are necessary to this purpose; that one half*
of

of the Christian World cannot so much as read; that many of the others understand no more than their Native Language, and that others are of Souls so slender, and such narrow capacities, that they can scarce be brought to a notion of the most easy things. And upon this they would advance the Method of Authority. But besides, that M. de Meaux his Principle might be proved liable to the same difficulties, and a man may ask, How it comes to pass, that persons so ignorant as Children are, in whom are met all the infirmities taken notice of in Tradesmen, in poor Labourers, in Soldiers, and in Women, as being no less drawn off by the employments of their Age, nor less to seek for necessary helps and advantages, and whose Soul and capacity is not either larger or more lively, should ever be able to make an Act of Divine Faith, with respect to the Churches Infallible Authority, where so many points must be discuss'd, before we can come to a determination; This Prelate hath taken the trouble to answer both for him and me, so home to the business, that I need only make use of his own words, and beg the favour of him to agree and stand to them. 'Tis not to be imagined, says he, that Children, in whom reason begins to appear, because they know not how to rank their Discourses, are incapable of resenting the impressions of Truth. They are seen to learn to speak in an Age yet more infirm; in what manner they learn, by what they make the distinction between the Noun and the Verb, the Substantive and the Adjective, neither themselves know, nor can we who have learnt by this Method well explicate, so deep and hidden it is. We learn almost in the same manner the Churches Language, a secret Light guides us in both these states; in the one 'tis Reason, in the other Faith; Reason discovers it self by little and little, and so does Faith infused by Baptism. So then there is nothing at all that hinders the method of our instructing Children, and that is not very regular & well contriv'd in it.

English.
Reflect.
page 83.

This was not the method of our forefathers, says M. de Meaux. And pray why not? Because, when they baptized them in their Infancy, they said in that Young Age, Credo, I believe, and our Reformers have changed this Form. M. de Meaux might have said something more to the purpose if he had pleased. What signifies this Credo, or the Change which the Reformed have made in this Form, to the method now in debate? This form shews us, that when they shall have the use of Reason, they must be immediately taught to make an Act of Faith, and time must not be lost in exciting them to it. Who questions it? Are they not taught by our method to make this act of Faith at the first? or is any time lost in exciting them to it? As soon as ever they come to any use of their Reason, we propose to them the objects of Faith, we explain them, we endeavour to make them sensible of their Excellency and Divinity, and is not this not only teaching how to make an Act of Faith, but losing no time in teaching them? They will then be capable of it, says M. de Meaux. They will be capable of it, no doubt

English
Reflect.
P. 75.

Ibid.

Pag 75.

doubt, as soon as they are taught it; because we suppose the Holy Ghost, and Faith infused in them, and then all that we have left to do, is only to lay the objects plainly before their eyes, and this depends upon the instruction that is given them.

This prepossession is a very strange thing. Does M. de Meaux imagine, that the Method of the Churches Infallibility, is, I do not now say, a surer, and more safe, but, I say, a more compendious way for exciting these Acts of Divine Faith in Children, as they come to years of Reason, than that of instructing by the very objects themselves? If that be his opinion, he is under a mistake. I shall not now say, that one of the necessary preparations, is at the very first to persuade this Child these truths in general, That there is one God, That there is one True Religion, and one true Church which professes it; And that this true Religion, and this true Church, are the Church and Religion of Jesus Christ. This is in common to both the Methods. I shall not say, that unless we will make a blind, rash, inconsiderate Act, to be an Act of Divine Faith, this Child must be persuaded of the Churches Infallibility, and persuaded of it by good substantial proofs too; and those, not only deduced from the Testimony of the Church, because that testimony cannot take place yet; but such as do not depend at all upon Scripture too, because the Child is supposed never to have read that. Now, according to Mr. Arnaud his own Doctrine, which M. de Meaux has given his approbation of, this is a thing utterly impossible. *This Infallibility, (says he) is not a thing self-evident, because it depends solely upon the Will of God, which he hath declared to us by the Scriptures.* So that, according to him, we cannot advance this Tenet by proofs that have no dependance upon Scripture.

But however, we will suppose that a Man might, and really had discharged this particular of his duty towards the Child, I say still, that another necessary predisposition will be, to teach him where this Infallible Authority of the Church is lodged, and make him capable of hearing and understanding its voice; otherwise it will be impossible to deduce his principle of Divine Faith from it. Now it is acknowledged, that this Infallible Authority is neither in his Parish Priest, nor in his Bishop, nor in the particular Church he lives in, nor in his whole Nation, nor in any thing of all that he can meet with in the common way of Conversation. If you tell him, he will find it in the Pope of Rome; all the Gallican Church will assure him of the contrary. If you place it in Councils lawfully assembled; Several other Nations, who count themselves as much Catholicks as the Gallican Church, will never agree to it. If you tell him, 'tis the consent of the Universal Church in all Ages; ~~Whether~~ shall he go to seek this consent, which is not to be found but by the

La perpe-
tuite de la
foy. Tom.
2. Ch. 7.
Lib. 1. p.
94.

the perusal of a Thousand Volumes, the greatest part whereof are either Greek or Latin? If you say, 'Tis the consent of the Church at this day upon Earth, this will be no such ease neither; because in order to discover what that is, he must consult all the Churches, and know exactly in what points they differ, and in what they agree, which is a business of no small trouble.

Further still, when the several points in which all the parts of the Universal Church are agreed, come to be sufficiently discovered, there is another distinction yet necessary to be made. For M. de Meaux acknowledges, that there may be sometimes in the Church *many pernicious Maxims and Practices, which creep in, and get ground by little and little, and become common, but are not passed into Doctrines.* So that there is a necessity of distinguishing betwixt that part of this General Consent which is passed into Doctrine, and that part which is not so, that so he may not mistake those pernicious Maxims and Practices for Articles of the Catholick Faith. Now to omit urging here, that it is a very odd thing, and very hard to believe, that the Universal Church should be Infallible in all such matters as pass into Doctrines, and yet at the same time liable to error, as to certain pernicious Maxims and Practices that become common; This distinction, what method soever be taken in the making it, will cost a great deal of time, and be subject to very great difficulties. For we will suppose, that these *Things thus passed into Doctrines*, are the Characteristical note of the Churches Infallibility, and, as it were, the sphere of her Activity; Must not this Child, unless you will impose upon him, have it made plain to him, what passing into Doctrines means? It is not to be imagined that every Opinion which carries the Pope's, or the Councils Authority, is presently passed into a Doctrine. * *All that is found in the Councils, says Arcadius, does not make a point of Faith, they are only such things as were defined by the Fathers assembled in Council, and approved by the Pope of Rome.* M. de Meaux knows very well, that there are a great many persons in his Communion, and those, persons of no despicable Character neither, who maintain, that the Church of Rome hath not yet defined any thing concerning the existence of the Accidents in the Elements of the Eucharist, although this pretended Existence be a point settled in the Council of *Constance*, in as much as the contrary opinion is there reckoned in the Catalogue of *Wickliff* his Articles, condemned by the Council †.

Eng. Reflect. p. 19.

* Neque quicquid habetur in Conciliis, rem facit de fide, sed ea tantum quæ a Patribus Concilii definiuntur, approbante Romano Pontifice.

tifice. *Arcad. de Concord. Sacram. Evang. Lib. 3. Cap. 35. Edit. Lut. Paris, 1626.*

† There are 45 of *Wickliff*'s Articles expressly mentioned, the second whereof is in these words, *Accidentia panis non manent sine subiecto, in eodem Sacramento, i. e. Altaris.* These 45 Articles the Synod, it is there said, had ordered to be carefully examined by many of the Reverend Fathers of the *Roman Church*, Cardinals, Bishops, Abbots, Masters of Divinity,

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Doctors of both Laws, and many other famous persons, and these upon Examination having found some of them to be notoriously heretical, and long since rejected by the holy Fathers, some not Catholick but Erroneous, others scandalous and blasphemous, some offensive to pious Ears, others rash and seditious; They do in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ disallow, and condemn by this perpetual Decree, all and singular these Articles, &c. and command his Books to be publickly burnt. *vid. Labb. Collect. Conc. Tom. 12. Ad An. 1415. Edit. Paris. 1672.* To which, if we add the Council of *Trents* Canon which Anathematizes all who affirm that the substance of Bread and Wine remains, or deny the substance of Christ's Body and Blood to be there, the species only of Bread and Wine remaining, this will be as definitive as can be expected. *Conc. Trid. de Sacram. Euc. Cap. 4. Can. 2.*

But after having found out what *passing into Doctrines* means, which is according to *Arcadius* his definition, having been decided by a Council, and approved by the Pope, are we upon this discovery, got at last to the Infallible Authority we search after, so as to make Acts of Divine Faith thereupon? Not in the least. 'Tis plain matter of Fact, and a Truth that *M. de Meaux* cannot disown, that some Councils approved by the Pope, or, which comes all to the same thing, that some Popes with the approbation of a Council, *Sacro approbante Concilio*, have passed notorious Errors, and such as are of a most dangerous consequence, into points of Doctrine. This is what may be made appear by fundry instances, and, to go no further, by that of the last *Lateran* Council, where the Pope, *Sacro Concilio approbante*, determines, || that the *Bishop of Rome alone hath authority over all Councils*, and in which he gave the force of a Law to that Constitution of *Boniface* the eighth, commonly called *The Extravagant, * Unam sanctam*. Of which a Man may without any injustice affirm, that it contains the most pernicious, and the most mad, unreasonable

|| This Bull
may be seen
in Corp.
Juris Ca-
non. sep-
tem. De-

cret. Lib. 3. Tit. 7. de Concil. cap. 1. In it the Bull of Boniface is reinforced, the pragmatick Sanction abrogated, and the Subjection to the Pope declared to be one of the things necessary to Salvation; The Acts of the Council of Basil are declared void for this reason particularly. Cum solum Rom. Pontificem pro tempore existentem, tanquam Auctoritatem supra omnia Concilia habentem, Conciliorum indicendorum, transferendorum, dissolvendorum plenum jus & potestatem habere, nedum & Sacrae Scripturae Testimonio, dictis sanctorum Patrum, ac aliorum Roman. Pontificum, sacrorumq; Canonum decretis, sed propria eorundem Conciliorum confessione constet manifestè, and then goes on to give instances. vid. etiam Labb. Col. Conc. Tom. 14. Conc. Lateran, Sess. 11. Bull. Pastor æternus, &c. Edit. Paris. 1672.

* This Decree of *Boniface* may be seen in *Extravagant. Commun. Lib. 1. Tit. 8. de Majoritate & Obedientiâ, wherein, after having asserted both a Spiritual and Temporal Sword, the one to be used by the Church, the other for it, that is, by Princes at the Pope's command and sufferance, (In manu Regum & militum, ad nutum & patientiam sacerdotis) he concludes thus, Porro subesse Romano Pontifici omni humanæ Creaturæ declaramus, dicimus, definimus, & pronunciamus omnino esse de necessitate salutis. vid. Corp Jur. Canon. Extravag. ut supra.*

Doctrine, concerning the Popes Supremacy, in the whole World. This pretended Infallibility then must be sought somewhere else, and more distinctions made still.

It will be replied to this, that if this Infallibility do not lie in all the several points passed into Doctrines, yet it is visible in those however, which all the World are agreed upon, and that never met with any opposition, such as hath been made against that determination of the last *Lateran Council*. But, not to answer here, that this is forming a pleasant sort of Idea for Infallibility, to confine it to these things only which all the World are agreed upon, and so to advance such an Infallibility as oppositions destroy; whereas in the nature of the thing, this ought to bear down all opposition; without objecting further, that this gives occasion to a great many other questions not less necessary to be resolved, than they are nice; as for instance, to know exactly how considerable these oppositions must be, to render them effectual against Infallibility; and whether it be sufficient to this purpose, that a particular Church singly, or one whole Nation oppose it, and no more; to know, whether, when one party who think themselves the stronger shall have condemned this opposition, that restores Infallibility, and make it on their side; to know, whether, when the party which carries it in number, but are much the weaker in judgment and reason, shall crush that opposition by main force, and in a very violent and boisterous manner, they are then become more infallible than they were before the opposers were quelled: Not to insist upon all this, I say, which yet is very well worth a Man's while to canvass, Ought it not at least be well known, whether the general consent that is pretended, be really and truly such, or whether it might not rather be, either fear, or compliance, or coldness in Religion, ignorance, or idleness, and cowardice, and such other worldly and carnal principles, that might have hindred the opposition from being more publick? For if it were so, How can that ever be looked upon as a General Consent? Or what probability is there, that Infallibility should have a good title conveyed by such ill means? Ought not a Man to be well assured, that there will start up no new opposition hereafter? For in matters of Doctrine, Custom and Prescription are no good arguments against the Truth, so that a part of the Church shall at any time have full and just power to declare themselves in opposition, whenever they shall think fit; and consequently put a stop to the progress of Infallibility.

Lastly, When all these difficulties are removed, the way made smooth and easy, the Child, or the Man that is to be taught, by substantial fair Arguments brought into a fit condition to hear the Infallible voice of the Church,

and to believe whatever she shall teach him with a Divine Faith; I would gladly be inform'd, who it is that shall convey this voice to him: Shall it not be his Parish Priest, or his Priest's Deputy, or some Missionary, whose business it is to Catechise and instruct the ignorant; or however his Bishop; that is, in short, Chuse what course you please, shall they not be men that are subject to mistakes, and who it is possible may take upon them to teach their own private fantasies, and call them the Faith of the Catholick Church? Pray resolve me, whether one ought entirely to depend upon these, and whether without any further information than their bare Testimony, he might with a safe Conscience say to them, *I believe, as I believe that God is, that what you tell me is the infallible Doctrine of the Church, to whose Authority men ought to submit; and as such, without any further assurance of its being such, than your declaring that it is so, I believe it with a Divine Faith.* I take M. de Meaux to be a person of so great Equity and Integrity, that he will acknowledg this cannot be done; and that instead of making an Act of Divine Faith this way, a Man would quite contrary, not only bring himself to a mere humane Faith, but, besides, would expose his Conscience as a prey to Error and Imposture. It is necessary therefore for the avoiding this inconvenience, to lead this Child directly to the Churches Infallible Authority, that so he may hear her voice immediately from her self, without any Pipe of Conveyance, without Minister, and without Interpreter. For so long as there continues a fallible medium between him and it, it is evident, he can never be perfectly assured, that it is that Infallible Authority which his Conscience ought to rely upon, and confide in; nor can he consequently ever believe with a Divine Faith; because in order to that, it is not enough that he be shewed the Catholick Church, but he must moreover be shewed particularly in what part she is infallible, and be brought thither in such a manner, as that he may apply himself to her immediately. Now if it be not granted, that this is absolutely impossible, it must at least be confess'd, that this renders the Child's progress horribly tedious, and cuts him out so much work as will take up the best part of his life; because to compass this, he must find out the Universal Consent of the Catholick Church, in such matters as are pass'd into Doctrines, and against which there never was, nor ever will be any opposition, and that, because men acquiesce in them upon a principle voluntarily and sincerely; And therefore to imagine, that this method of instruction by the Churches Authority, is shorter and more compendious than that of instructing by the objects themselves, is but feeding a Mans self with wild fancies; and M. de Meaux could not possibly have hit upon any thing more contrary to his own principle, than what

what he hath said, That *Children must be immediately taught to make an Act of Faith, and time must not be lost in exciting them to it*; for it is an infinite loss of time, to carry them about by the Churches Authority. Eng. Reflect. p. 75

But the thing that most surprises me in this Prelate's arguing, is, that he hath managed his business so ill, as to the Consequence, which he pretends to infer from the *Protestants* Principle, that they of necessity must either have no great matter in it, or if it be so horrible a thing as this Prelate would perswade us, it rebounds back with all its *horror*, upon him and his Religion, as well as upon us. To give as clear a demonstration of this, as if it were a proposition in the *Mathematicks*, all we need do, is to put the same supposition against him, which he hath done against us. Let us imagine then a *baptised person*, whom both *Monsieur de Meaux* and we acknowledg to be a *Christian*, one that, * according to what was defined in the Council of *Vienna* under *Clement* the fifth, hath received the Holy Ghost, and *Faith infused*, or habitual, and who is now come to years of discretion. As there is a certain time, when he hath not as yet read the Holy Scripture, so is there likewise a time, when he hath never been taught that there is an infallible *Catholick Church*: For if we must needs confess that he hath not read the Holy Scripture ever since the time he was born, there is the same necessity, that he had not ever from the very time he was born, any knowledg of this *Infallible Church*. The knowledg of both these things had some time antecedent to it, in which neither of them was known, and this time must be an Age ripe for the use of Reason, because, if Reason be required in order to reading the Holy Scripture, and being perswaded that it comes from God, it is every whit as requisite, in order to acknowledging the *Catholick Church*, and being perswaded of her *Infallibility*. As therefore, there will according to our principle be a point of Time, in which a *Baptized Christian*, who is come to the use of his Reason, and hath Faith infused, cannot make this Act of Divine Faith, *I believe, as I believe that God is, that the Scripture is his word*, because he will not as yet have read it: In like manner will there be such a time, wherein this *Baptized Christian*, at years of discretion, and endowed with an infused Faith, cannot make this Act of Divine Faith, *I believe, as I believe that God is, that the Catholick Church is infallible*, because this is what he will not yet have learnt any thing of. If *M. de Meaux* affirm with such confidence, that this

* The words of the definition, so far as they concern this matter, are these, Aliis asserentibus, quod in baptismo, & virtutes, & gratia informans infunduntur quoad habitum, etsi non pro illo tempore quoad usum; Nos opinio- nem, quae dicit tam parvulis quam adultis con-

ferri in baptismo informantem gratiam, & virtutes, tanquam probabiliorem ——— Sacro approbante Concilio duximus eligendam. *Clement. Lib. i. Tit. i. de sum. Trin. & fide Catholic.*

former is a horrible proposition; *That a Baptized Christian, at the Age of Reason, cannot make upon the Scripture an Act of that Faith, by which we are Christians,* he must as stiffly affirm the second to be no less horrible, *That a Baptized Christian, at the Age of Reason, cannot upon the Infallibility of the Church, make an Act of that Faith, by which we are Catholics.* If he be of opinion, that the Condition in which this Baptized Christian at the Age of Reason is, with relation to the Scripture, is a condition of *Doubting* whether the Scripture be inspired by God or no; because *to doubt, is, not to know whether a thing be or not*; he must also be of opinion, that the condition which this Baptized Christian at the Age of Reason is in, with regard to the Churches Infallibility, is every whit as much a condition of doubting, whether the Church be Infallible or not, and that upon the very same reason, because, *not to know whether a thing be, or not, is to doubt of it.* Moreover, if he pretend, that, according to our hypothesis, it is not possible to make any act of Divine Faith upon the mysteries of our Religion, such for instance, as the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Mission of Jesus Christ, nor the Redemption of mankind, before he have read the Scripture, for fear of acknowledging a principle of Divine Faith besides the Scripture; he must confess withal, that, according to his hypothesis, it is not possible for him to make any Act of Divine Faith upon the same mysteries, before he have learnt that the Church hath an Infallible Authority, for fear of acknowledging another principle of Divine Faith, besides the Churches Authority. In one word, the case is so exactly the same in both, that this Prelate cannot find any difference between them, which will not make for our advantage: So that he will of necessity be driven, either to retract this violent and passionate saying, *That there is a point (of time) in which, according to our Doctrine, a Christian is obliged to doubt, whether the Scripture be inspired by God, whether the Gospel be a Truth or a Fable; whether Jesus Christ be a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth:* Or else, if he be so resolute, that he will not clear us of this charge, he must bring the same accusation upon himself, and lay it at his own door, which will be done by adding only this clause, *That this Christian is as much obliged to doubt whether the Catholick Church be Infallible.* We can maintain against him, that there is no evasion, no middle course betwixt these two.

This is almost the very same that I offered to him in the Conference, and to which I had no answer returned, which was a sufficient indication, that no good one could be returned to it. But however, let us see what he hath written upon this subject in his fourth Reflection. *As we,* says he, *shew Mr. Claude a point of time, which, even at the use of Reason, necessarily precedes the reading of the Scripture, he must also be able to shew us one,*
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that precedes the Churches instructions; but this he will never find. No? Will he never find this? What a sad case that is? Before the Churches instructions can be received, so as to believe with a Divine Faith what she tells us, (for of these instructions it is, that we dispute at present) we must first know, what is the meaning of these Two words, *The Church*, and *Infallible*; we must likewise know further, that there is one Catholick Church in the World; after that we must know, that this Catholick Church is infallible; and lastly, we must also know, where this Catholick Church is to be found. Now a man cannot, without making himself a laughing-stock to the whole World, imagine that all these Ideas are natural to a Child, or born with him; much less still, that they are infused into him some supernatural way, nor disown, that they are all acquired; that is, that they came upon this Child since the time of his Birth, and his Baptism, by the use he makes of his reason, and the conversation he hath had among Christians. Suppose a young Infant were presently after he is Baptised, carried off into some Wilderness, there to live among wild Beasts; or that he were sent away into the further extream parts of *Tartary*, to be educated there among Heathens; it is sure, that without a Miracle he could never have any of these Ideas of a Catholick Church, and an infallible Church; it is also certain, he could not have any of those Mysteries that are conveyed to us by revelation, for the Ideas that depend upon revelation, in the ordinary way, are communicated only by the Word. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.* Now from hence it manifestly follows, that there is a point, in which, even at the use of Reason, a Child hath not as yet these Ideas, and consequently a point of Time, which precedes the instructions of the Church. So that if the Business stick only at the finding out such a point of time, M. de Meaux must without any more ado acknowledg, that the same Argument may be objected against him with regard to the Church, that he objects to us with regard to Scripture. A man must first have been instructed, that there is a Church, and that this Church is infallible, before he can possibly receive the Doctrines of the Church, so as to believe them with a Divine Faith; and this very instruction, supposing the use of Reason strong enough to receive it, does also as necessarily suppose a certain portion of time, even at the use of Reason, in which this Child had not the least knowledg of these things.

To ask now, proceeds M. de Meaux, by what Motives God makes us sensible of his Churches Authority, is to depart visibly from the Question. And pray why is this to depart from the Question? If there be such Motives, as works in this Child a perswasion of the Churches Authority, these must of necessity be presented by the means of Instruction, he can never

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attain to them any other way. They must also be presented to him, after that he is come to make some use of his reason, for he is not capable of them just at the very first moments that his reason shews it self. Now who is so blind, as not to perceive, that this very thing does clearly determine the Question, whether there be any point of time, in which a Child hath not as yet any knowledg at all of these Motives, seeing the necessary consequence of this is, that even at the use of Reason, this time, or this point may be particularly noted? If I may not be believed, yet at least believe M. de Meaux himself, who lays down this for one of the Motives, *That of all Societies, this is the sole, to whom none can shew her beginning, nor any inturruption of her visible and exterior state by any averr'd fact.* I do not now take upon me to argue, whether this Proposition be true or false; or, whether looking upon it as a Motive, it be conclusive or not; this is not a proper place for that. What I say, is only this, That supposing all M. de Meaux hath said here, you do likewise suppose, that the Children must before have made some use of his reason, in order to be wrought upon by it; and consequently, that even at the use of reason, there may a certain point of time be noted, in which the Child had not any knowledg at all of this matter. So that this particular is now granted on all hands; and persons of sound sense, and sound faith too, will be of opinion, that I have demonstrated, the force of both our Arguments to be alike, even by M. de Meaux his own confession. There needs therefore no further disputing of the case, there is a point of time, at the use of reason, antecedent, not only to all the Churches instructions, but moreover to all instructions concerning the Church; as well as there is such a point of time, at the use of reason, which precedes the reading of the Scripture. Whether, in the method of all the Informations we receive, those concerning the Church be the first in order, is a distinct Question, and what way soever it be determined, will not hinder, there being such a point of time in which a baptised Christian cannot say, *I believe, as I believe, that God is, that this Catholick Church, which I am going to hear, hath an infallible Authority;* and this is the very thing I undertook to prove.

But to carry the matter on still farther, and let men see by this particular instance, how dangerous a thing it is to be engaged in the defence of false Propositions, I do maintain, not only, that it is not true, that there is not a point of time before the Churches instructions, wherein this Child hath not the least knowledg of the infallibility we are now discoursing of; but besides, that it is not true, that the first instructions are those of this infallible Church; my meaning is, that it is not this infallible Church which gives him the first informations, and prevails with him

him by her Authority to believe them with a Divine Faith. To evince this, I had said in the Conference, that in our Creed, that Article which concerns the Church, is placed after the Articles of Doctrine, and that the beginning of it is thus, *I believe in God Almighty*, and so on. After which we come at length to the Catholick Church; whereas on the contrary, if the Churches infallible Authority were laid as the ground and foundation of all the rest, the Creed ought to begin in another manner, and men should say, *I believe the Church, and by the Catholick Church I believe in God the Father.* He considers not, says M. de Meaux, that 'tis the Church her self which teaches us the whole Creed; that 'tis on her word we say, *I believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his only Son*, and so on; which we cannot say with a firm Faith, unless God at the same time puts in our hearts, that the Church which teaches us, deceives us not.

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Reflect.
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M. de Meaux himself does not consider, that the infallible voice of the Church, if there were such a one, must be either in the Pope, or in the Council, or in the Pope and Council together, or in the Universal consent of the Church in all Ages, or in that of all Christians now alive, with respect to things that are passed into Doctrines: and that, which way soever of all these it be considered, 'tis absurd to affirm, that this infallible voice of the Church, is it which gives the Child his first instructions. If we will speak Reason and Truth, we must say, That our Fathers, our Mothers, our Nurses, our first Tutors, or at best our ordinary Pastors, are the persons that convey to us these first instructions, and that it is not by any means the Catholick Church, speaking by any Mouth of hers which pretends to infallibility.

But says, M. de Meaux, *When Children hear their Parents, they hear the Church, for our Parents are our Teachers, only as they are Children of the Church; 'tis for this reason the Holy Ghost sends us to them, Ask thy Father, and he will shew thee; thy Elders, and they will tell thee.* When Children hear their Parents, they hear the Church, what is this to the purpose? Do they hear the infallible Voice of the Church, so as to be able to form thereupon an Act of Divine Faith; and to say, *I believe, as I believe that God is, that what my Parents tell me is this, The infallible Voice of the Church, and as such I receive it as the Voice of God himself?* If M. de Meaux do not mean as much as this comes to, he plays and trifles with his disputation. Children hear the Church, when they hear their Parents, but nevertheless they may not believe what they say with a Divine Faith, they believe it with a humane Faith only. Is not this plainly to desert the cause, and acknowledg the very thing we are now affirming? But if his meaning be, that they do then hear the infallible Voice of the Church, so as from thence to be able to form an Act of Divine Faith upon it, he is necessitated

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ted at the same time, to own the Fathers, the Mothers, the Nurses, the Tutors, the Parish Priests, the Vicars, the Catechists, and in general all the first Instructors of Children, for infallible persons. He must assert, that when the Church makes them her Children, and, as such, our first Teachers, she does at the same time invest them with her Infallibility; for, if it be not so, what probable pretence can there be for making Acts of Divine Faith upon the first instructions they give us? I am very well satisfied, that they should be the dispensers of the Churches Doctrine, and agree that they instruct us as such; but the main point is, Whether they be Infallible dispensers, or not? If they be, then here is Infallibility displayed, and diffused far and wide in the Catholick Church, by the particular favour of M. de Meaux. Here it is distributed very cheap and plentiful, this Prelates Nurse will be as much infallible, as the Prelate himself; his Lordships Bailiff as much so as the Pope of Rome himself; and the honest little Vicar of *Vaugirard*, as much so, as the first Council of *Nice*. A mighty blessing this! But if these People be not infallible, then their word is no longer the infallible Voice of the Church, nor their instruction any more the instruction of the Churches infallible Authority. Then we cannot any more form upon that instruction an Act of Divine Faith, which is the very business in controversy between us, the Infallible instructions of the Church are not any more the first instructions we receive, and all M. de Meaux his Dispute vanishes away into Air and Smoak. There will be then a certain time, when a baptized Christian, at the Age of Reason, and having Faith infused, will not be able to say, *I believe, as I believe that God is, that the Catholick Church is infallible*; there will also be another time, in which he cannot say, *I believe by the Churches infallible Authority, as I believe that God is, that the Holy Scripture is inspired by God*; *I believe, by the same Authority, that the Gospel is no Fable, but a Divine Truth*; *I likewise believe, by the same Authority, that Jesus Christ is not an Impostor, as Infidels think of him, but the Teacher of the Truth.*

There will likewise be another point of time, in which M. de Meaux will be forced to acknowledg a bare humane Faith in this Child, for which he hath signified such a mighty aversion. I desire he would please to tell us what Faith he calls that, by which the Child believes the Catholick Church is Infallible, merely upon the testimony of his Father, or his Parish Priest, and without examining the grounds and reasons for it himself; or that, by which he believes the Scripture to be of Divine inspiration, upon the bare word of his Father, or Parish Priest, who tell him, that this is the opinion of the Catholick Church, without enquiring at all, whether this be in truth the Catholick Churches opinion or not. For if he says these are Acts of Divine Faith, he must necessarily sup-

suppose at the same time, that the Father, and the Parish Priest are infallible witnesses, and if he will not allow them to be infallible, he must own a humane Faith. And here I cannot but take notice how much *M. de Meaux* abuses this term Human Faith, for the whole Air of his discourse seems all along to insinuate, that it is not only absurd, but really impious, to say, that the Scripture may be believed with a human Faith, and the plainer sort of people may very easily misunderstand it. It is expedient to shew clearly what the meaning of this is. Faith then may be termed humane, either with regard to the object of it, or with regard to the original of it, that is, the efficient cause that produces it in us; or with regard to the moral cause of it, that is, the Argument, or Motive, which moves us to believe the thing. It is humane as to its object, when the matter it is concerned about is only a thing belonging to men, as the Exploits, suppose, that are related to us in History; the Victories, for instance, obtained by *Cæsar*, or the mighty Conquests of *Alexander*. It is humane as to its Original, or Principle, when the Apprehension which forms it in us, is purely natural and humane, and such is that Apprehension by which I believe, that there is in the World such a City as is called *Constantinople*, or that the Acts reported to be done by *Cæsar* and *Alexander*, are true. It is humane, lastly, as to its moral Cause, when the Argument or motive that prevails with me to believe it, is a testimony merely humane, and such as carries nothing of Divine Authority with it; and thus I believe the Conquests of *Cæsar* and *Alexander*, upon the testimony of the Historians which give a relation of them. When the Scripture therefore is said to be believed by a humane Faith, it must not be supposed, that we take this Faith to be humane in regard of its object. 'Tis a truth perfectly agreed upon among all professors of Christianity, and which *M. de Meaux* and I never contest about, that the Scripture is a supernatural, Divine thing. Nor must it be supposed, that we call this Faith humane with respect to its principle, or efficient Cause, for I cannot in the least doubt, but that the very first sentiments, of the Child in favour and respect to the Scripture, and that teachable frame of mind by which he believes it to be Divine, upon the Testimony of his Father, or Pastor, do proceed from the Operation of the Holy Ghost, which only produces in us not only Faith it self, but even the very inclinations and dispositions to that Faith. This Faith then is called humane, solely with regard to the Argument or Motive which moves the Child to believe; for this Argument not being as yet any Infallible or Divine Authority, but only the Testimony of his Father, or Spiritual Pastor, can be no more than a humane Argument. This may be illustrated by the Example of the Inhabitants

tants of *Sichar*, who at first believed Jesus Christ to be the *Messias*, upon the bare word of the *Samaritan Woman*; but afterwards believed upon the conviction they themselves had received, by seeing and hearing him speak. For, they said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him our selves; and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World. If you pass a judgment upon the first act of these mens Faith, with regard to its object, you must have a great care how you say it is a humane Faith. The *Messias* is a Divine Object. So likewise if you judge of it with respect to its efficient cause, you must not call it humane, for this was one of the first operations of Grace. But if you judge of it with relation to the Argument it was grounded upon, then you must term it a humane Faith, because this Argument was nothing else, but the bare testimony of that *Samaritan Woman*. They believed in him, says the Evangelist, for the saying of the Woman. It is easie to apply this to our present case.

Joh. 4. 42.
Ver. 39.

Thus you see we are upon the level with M. de Meaux, as to our Consequence; and it lies now upon him to inform us, if there be any privilege that can give just occasion, why His consequence deduced from our Principle should be full of horror, and deserve to be represented in such terms, as were, of any that could possibly have been made use of, the most likely to strike a dread into *Mademoiselle de Duras*; but yet ours deduced from his Doctrine, should become gentle, agreeable enough, and fit to be treated with all the tenderness, and in the most honourable manner in the World. It will be now his business to shew us, whether, when we and our Religion are the subjects of the debate, a Man ought to say, that the condition we suppose the Baptized Christian to be in, is an obligation upon him to doubt, whether the Scripture be inspired by God, whether the Gospel be a Truth, or a Fable; whether Jesus Christ be a Deceiver, or a Teacher of the Truth: But when we discourse of him, and his hypothesis, we should do it in another sort of language, and immediately put quite another face and expression upon the thing. For my own part, I who am no such Master of Complement and Address, am very well content to defend M. de Meaux against himself, but then would defend my self too; I am willing to shelter his own Principle from the heat of his passion, but I desire too to partake my self of the benefit I shall do him. I say then in vindication both of him and my self, that what he calls *Doubling*, is not in strict and proper speaking any such thing. For, as I observed before, to doubt of the Truth, or Nature of any thing, implies not only, that a Man hath a knowledg, and hath already formed an Idea of it within himself; but more than that, that he hath made some enquiry into the question in dispute,

dispute, that he hath studied it with some application and attention, and hath taken a view of very near all the Reasons that can be alledged on either side; but upon finding those Reasons of almost equal weight, the mind could not tell how to determine it self. In one word, Doubting signifies an Act of the Judgment already made, but of a wavering judgment, which could not settle it self on either side. This is what men call *Doubting*, when they design to speak properly and exactly. Whence I infer, that when a Man hath not as yet made any act of judgment upon a thing, as both of us suppose the Baptized person hath not, neither upon the Scripture, as having not read it yet, nor upon the Churches Authority, as having not searcht into the grounds of it yet, this Man may properly be said to be ignorant of the thing, to have no knowledg or notion at all of it; but he cannot by any means be said to doubt of it.

Thus much in my opinion may suffice to put the Readers in a capacity of judging of M. de Meaux's pretended consequence, and discerning whether he had any great reason to triumph and insult so upon it. But how ill soever I think of the cause, the Prelate that vindicates it, is a person, for whom I do still, and ever shall retain, all the honour and respect that his own deserts require. An Argument, and the propounder of that Argument, are two very different things; and in contending against the one, I do not forego the honour due to the other. Upon this account it is, that I cannot pass over M. de Meaux's seventh Reflection, without some little notice; the business and design of which is, to aggravate this passage in my Relation. *Here M. de Condom's mind was seen not to be in its usual state, and the liberty which is so natural to him, sensibly decreased.* This seems to me an Intimation, that the Bishop was not well satisfied with these words, which obliges me to make this declaration to him now, That I spoke purely with regard to that which was the subject of our dispute, without the least reflection upon his personal abilities. When I shall have any occasion to mention the strength of his Wit, his Judgment, and Apprehension, I will never be unjust to him upon that point, nor retract whatever I have already written concerning them. But I hope for all that, when the advantages of the Cause I assert, are to be discours'd of, he will allow I should endeavour to make them appear in the best manner my weakness is capable of doing it. I know very well, that, to excellent natural parts, he hath made a large addition of acquired knowledg; but notwithstanding all that, I must be of opinion, that it is one of the most impossible things in the World to maintain his Argument. These two Truths are not in the least destructive, or prejudicial to one another.

Meaux's
English
Reflect.
page 87.

All that needs now to be done, for the bringing this business to a Conclusion, is only to say one word concerning M. de Meaux his Argument, and the Principle he asserts, with relation to Heretical and Schismatical Communions. I offered in the Conference, that this Prelate's Maxims would serve every jot as well to continue a Jew in his Judaism, a Pagan in his Paganism, a Heretick in his Heresy, and a Schismatick in his Schism, as an Orthodox Christian in the true Church. The Reason I urged for it, was, that supposing this to be the first Article a Child was to be instructed in, *That he must submit to the Churches Infalible Authority, and receive the Scripture, and all other points of Religion at her hands,* the Child must needs apply his Idea of the Church, to that particular Society in which he lived; so that it must needs be to that that he would submit; from that he would receive the Scripture as of Divine Authority; and from her, in short, he would take the meaning and interpretation of that Scripture. Thus if M. de Meaux his Principle held good, there could be no expedient found out for reclaiming a Heretick, or a Schismatick, from that particular Communion, into which, by being born and brought up in it, he had the unhappiness to be incorporated. To this purpose, I instanced in an *Æthiopian* Child, and they that please may take a second view of this passage in the Conference, where they will perceive how M. de Meaux cleared his hands of that Argument. We must examine at present, what fresh objections he hath brought against it in his Fifth Reflection.

English
Reflect.
Pag. 78.

They, says he, *sometimes when men cannot free themselves, think to get off, by endeavouring to cast others into the like perplexity as theirs.* To what purpose serves this haranguing upon a common place which I might very justly retort, by saying, Thus sometimes, when men endeavour to perplex others, they perplex themselves? I appeal to the Reader's Judgment, whether I were perplexed with M. de Meaux his Argument, and whether what I offered to him, concerning Heretical and Schismatical Communions, be any evasion or retiring to save my self.

Ibid.

He will gain nothing (adds he) *by this address; for, in fine, what cause does he pretend to combat for? Is it for indifferency of Religions? Will he say with the wicked, that there is not a true Church, in which men indeed act by Divine Motions? And under pretence that the Devils, or if he pleases, Nature can imitate, or, to say better, counterfeit those Motions, Will he maintain that they are every where imaginary?*

What occasion have I given M. de Meaux to accuse me of contending for indifferency of Religion? I pretend to make it appear, that his Principle tends directly to maintain every man in the Religion he was born in; Must this be called contending for indifferency of Religions?

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If there be any thing in the dispute between us, that seems to favour such an indifference, his Principle must be taxed with it, and not I, who only take notice of the Consequences of his Principle, with a design to shew how ill a one it is. Will not this Prelate, who knows so very well when he hath a mind to it, how to argue upon the *Protestants* Principles, distinguish at all, between what a Man speaks as from himself, and the consequences that are inferred from the Maxims of an Antagonist? If I had said, as from my self, any thing that tended to indifference in Religions, he might have been smart upon me; but what pretence can he have to upbraid me at this rate, when I say that his Principle will serve as well to justify an Infidel, a Heretick, or a Schismatick, in the several Communions they were born in, as to keep an Orthodox Christian firm to his Church? *M. de Meaux* hath taken several other occasions besides this, to equivocate after this manner. In our Conference he was pleas'd to call what I said, to shew that his hypothesis made for the *Jews* Cause, a *Jewish Argument*; and you have seen in his second Reflection, how he charged me with an opinion, That men ought to examine after Jesus Christ; because, as he would needs have it, I had discovered so much in an Argument that I had made upon his Principle.

It shall never be I, nor any of the like Judgment with me, that shall go about to introduce Scepticism in Religion, and *M. de Meaux* will not find that any of us hath written such things as may be read in the Author of the Prejudices. *If it be true, that the darkness of our understandings, and our prejudices, may hinder us from discerning in the Scripture, and in the Fathers, such truths as are manifestly contained in them; and if even men of the most enlightned understandings, such as Mr. Claude, can offer evident falsities for the most certain and infalible proofs; who shall secure us, that we are not of the number of those that are deceived, and who have not made a good choice in the business of Religion, and that our being perswaded we have chosen well, is not an effect of our prejudices, and our passions, and of some secret fondness of our own opinions?* We know very well, not only that there are Divine Motions in the true Church, but likewise that there are plain sensible marks to distinguish them from those counterfeit motions which proceed from the Devil, or from Nature; and we shall always be very far from approving what the same Author of the Prejudices hath delivered; *That this assurance, this confidence, this freedom from scruples and fears, this inward rest and tranquility which is founded upon mens believing themselves to be in the good way, and to walk in the light, is a token so full of equivocation and deceit, that it ten thousand times oftner goes along with Error, and the way to Hell, than with Truth, and the way to Salvation.*

Prejug.
Legitim.
Pag. 12.

Pag. 44.

This

This Doctrine seems to us of such a pernicious nature, that we shall never scruple to declare our selves openly against it, and against every thing else which might have any tendency to indifference of Religions; only M. de Meaux would do well to let us know, which way such a declaration can be of any advantage to him, with relation to what I offered concerning the Heretical Communions; for this is what I have not been hitherto able to comprehend. I am of opinion, that the belief they continue in, of their own Communion's being the true Church, does not proceed from God, but from the Devil, or from Nature. I think too, that it is a mortal Error which leads them into perdition; But what is all this to our present purpose? We talk of reclaiming them from that Error; and I affirm, that if to their erroneous belief you proceed to add M. de Meaux his principle, the substance whereof is, That men must submit to the Church blindly, and implicitly; that they must receive the Scripture at her hand, believe it to be Divine upon her word, understand and interpret it only in her sense, believe what she shall tell you, merely because she says it, and without examining it at all, and hearken to nothing that shall contradict this; that there will be no way at all left to bring them off from this dangerous precipice.

Eng. Re-
flect. p.79.

And well, says M. de Meaux, if it be so, it remains only to chuse between all these different Churches, which attribute to themselves this Authority; But then the Calvinist Church is gone at the very first brush, she degrades her self from the Title of the Church; since she finds not in her self Authority enough to cause all those whom she begins to instruct, to make an Act of a Christian, and an Act of Divine Faith.

Although the Calvinistical Church, since M. de Meaux is pleased to call it by that name, do not rank her self among those who pretend to an absolute dominion over Consciences, yet there is no fear, either of her falling, or degrading her self upon this account. On the contrary, it is such kind of bold pretensions as these, and so highly injurious to Almighty God, that occasion the fall of the Societies, which fill their own heads with these fancies. These Societies degrade themselves, by labouring too much to exalt themselves, *Tolluntur in altum, Ut lapsu graviore ruant.*

The Church of Rome may dispute as much as she pleases with the Greek and Æthiopick Churches, concerning her imaginary Titles and Authority, This is a prize we are not at all greedy of, nor shall never be very earnest in contending for. We will still stand in all humility at the foot of the Throne of God, without ever offering to usurp the seat, and hope, that humility of ours will be a great deal more acceptable and pleasing to God, than the boldness of other men. *Deposuit potentes*

de

de sedibus, & exaltavit humiles, He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. Luk. 1.52.

But yet we may for all this, be allowed to look on, and see how the business is managed between the *Latins, Greeks, and Æthiopians*, and enquire what measures we ought to take in chusing between these several Churches. The true Church, says M. de Meaux, hath her particular Characters, that distinguish her from others; she hath, without going any further, or searching any deeper, her succession, in which none can shew her by any positive fact, any interruption, innovation, or change. This is what no false Church can so clearly glory of as the true, because by glorying of it she would visibly condemn her self; there will be then always in the Instruction which the true Church shall give her Children concerning her Condition, something that no other Sect can, or dare say. 'Tis by this we would convince, if it were in question, the *Greeks, the Ethiopians, the Armenians, and other Sects*, which seem in this respect more deceiving, because of the appearance of Succession that they shew; which also makes them way to attribute to themselves with a little more ground, the Authority of the Church. But as for the *Calvinian Church*, there is an end of her, because she hath not so much as an apparent and tolerable succession, and that she dares not, as we have now shewn by Mr. Claude's acknowledgment, attribute to her self this Authority, without which there can be neither any certain Instruction, nor any assured Foundation of Divine Faith, nor in fine, any Church.

English
Reflect.
page 80.

Let us talk no longer, I beseech you, of the *Calvinian Church*, which does not desire to have any thing to do in such kind of Contests. She knows well enough how to make good her own Cause, when there is a fit time for it; and if she have not that apparent, and colourable, that is, such a false and deceitful succession, as worldly strength only can give, she hath however a true and real one, which no Man can take away from her, and such as her hottest opposers are forced to acknowledg, is good, and of validity sufficient to constitute a true Church.

But this is not a proper place to enter upon that Controversy; our present debate concerns the Character, by which M. de Meaux is of opinion, that Children may distinguish the Church of Rome from the *Greek, the Æthiopick, and Armenian Churches*. Upon which occasion I need only say two things; The one, that seeing he will needs make the Truth, and consequently the Churches infallible Authority to depend upon this Character; he is driven to confess, whether he will or no, that there is a point, which even at the use of Reason, is antecedent to the instructions of this Infalible Church, and to the Act of Divine Faith formed upon those instructions. For it is one necessary previous piece of knowledge, to know that this Church hath the Character of Succession, with-

Eng. Re-
flect. p. 80.

English
Ref. p. 81.

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Pag. 81.

out Interruption, Innovation, or Change, which, it is evident, cannot be known any otherwise, than by the use of a Man's Reason. And when he told us such a point could never be found, he never dreamt of this at all. The second thing I have to say, is, That still this Character will be at least as fit an expedient, to confirm the *Greek*, or the *Æthiopian* in their Communion, as any member of the *Latin* Church in his. As brisk and confident as the *Latins* are, they do yet find themselves hard put to it, to vindicate their Church from those Charges of Innovation, which the *Greeks* lay to them, as, in the Use of unleavened Bread, in the Term *Filioq;* in the Creed, in the *Saturday's* Fast; in the Pope of *Rome's* pretentions; and, in one word, almost all the Articles that occasioned our separating from them. And as for exterior Succession, what have the *Latins* to recommend them above other Sects? M. de Meaux may satisfy himself in saying, *'Twould be no great labour to shew them the exact moment of their Innovation.* I am verily of opinion, that if he undertook the thing, he would not find it so mighty easy as he imagines, unless he made an advantage of the ignorance which at this day is predominant in those Sects, and that were but a very ill way of making Proselytes. However, this Character is of such doubtful right between the *Latin*, *Greek* and *Ethiopick* Churches, or, as he himself terms it, so deceiving a mark, that one of these two things must be confest; either, that the *Latins* cannot ground upon it any assurance in favour of their own Communion, nor consequently make an Act of Divine Faith upon the Instructions of their Church; or else, that the *Greeks* and *Ethiopians*, may each of them receive the same assurance for their respective Communi- ons, which they of the *Latin* Church can for theirs. The former of these utterly overthrows M. de Meaux's Principle, and the second is directly what my Argument is designed to prove.

M. de Meaux tells us, that he needs not enter into this dispute concerning the Succession of the *Greeks* and *Ethiopians*, nor Preach up the Church of *Rome*; that it is enough for him to shew, there is one true Church, somewhere or other, to which we must submit without examining; and besides, that this cannot be the *Calvinistical* Church, since she will her self have one examine after her; so that the excluding of the *Calvinistical*, is the establishing of the *Roman*. There is no more question, says he, to Preach the *Roman* Church, that is, that Body of the Church of which *Rome* is the head, since to him that will chuse between two Churches, the excluding of the one is the establishing of the other, without any need of disputing farther for this purpose.

Now this is called Fighting flying. M. de Meaux, let him say what he will, hath a great deal of need to enter into this dispute concerning Succession,

cession, for the maintaining his Principle, his Principle becomes evidently useless, unless men can be secured which is this true Church that hath Infallibility of her side, and to which he is of opinion they ought to submit. And since, for the coming to a knowledg of this Church, he gives no other distinguishing character, but that of Succession, he is under an obligation to shew, that this mark is in such a manner peculiar to the Church of *Rome*, that neither the *Greeks* nor *Ethiopians* can pretend to any share in it. Unless he proceed thus far, there will be still great reason to conclude his Principle vain and deceitful, as leaving men in utter suspense and uncertainty betwixt several Communions that differ from one another. *But it excludes the Calvinistical Church*, says he; *and to exclude that, is to establish the Roman, with relation to the Reformed.* I answer, the *Calvinistical Church* is not at all concerned at being excluded upon a principle supposed to be false and sophistical. Her rights and privileges are better grounded; and, tho she had no share in that fanciful Character of an apparent Succession, which will always be on the strongest side; yet the Succession of a True Faith, and True Worship, would abundantly make her amends for it. The Jewish Rabbins retain still to this day an apparent and exteriour Succession from *Moses* and the Prophets, for as much as they are the Children of those Scribes and Pharisees, which in Jesus Christ's time filled the Seat of those Divine persons, and they also themselves have sat in it: But this does not make them to be their true Successors, because they have neither the Spirit, nor Doctrine of the Prophets, and can shew nothing of either, but only the dead Letter.

Is not this of M. de Meaux's a marvellous fine Principle, which after having excluded the *Calvinistical Church*, determines men to that of *Rome*, merely for the advantage of convenience, that is, because they find it nigh at hand, at their very doors, and because she stretches out her Arms ready to receive them, whereas they must be forced to go a great way, if they designed to make choice of any other, without prejudice still, to such as shall happen to be nearer the *Greeks* and *Cophti*; and shall find it more advantageous to go over to their side? This is our Prelate's Method, which, for fear we should not understand perfectly, he takes the pains to explain it himself. *None thinks of leaving the Calvinists, but to come to us, when we oblige any one to leave them by shewing from their Ministers own confession, the enormous absurdities of their Doctrine, the work is perfected, and all the rest on that occasion would be to no purpose. And to the end the Method of the Conference, and the state of the Question, which is there treated, may be thoroughly understood, it did not aim directly to establish the Roman Churches: This is enough, we apprehend it sufficiently.* It is

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not by the purity of the Church of *Rome's* Doctrine, nor by the excellency of her Worship, nor by the peculiar priviledg of her Succession, nor by the substantial proof of the grounds of her Authority, nor by the peace of Conscience men shall find in their own Breasts, nor by the necessity that there is of making Acts of Divine Faith in her School, that M. de Meaux would bring us over to her; but it is upon the account of her being so very conveniently situated in respect of us. When once he hath stript us of the *Calvinistical* Communion, the work is done, according to the Lawyer's Maxim, *The next of kin goes away with all*. Necessity and Convenience, which are two admirable principles of Divine Faith, will presently prevail with us to put on the *Roman* Communion. I must needs own, this Confession hath something of sincerity in it.

M. de Meaux his Eighth Reflection Examined, wherein he pretends to shew, That the Protestant Church is formed after the same manner that all Heretical Churches have been.

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page 88.

Monsieur de Meaux complains, that I have past over this part of the Conference in four words, and given a very false Idea of it, in saying, that the Discourse here grew much more confused, and that we talk'd of divers things. He affirms, *That the Conversation was not confused in any part, and that it was less so in this than in the rest; That all we spoke tended to the same end, and that Madamoiselle de Duras seemed to have redoubled her attention.*

It is fit I should give him satisfaction in these particulars, before I proceed any further. I shall tell him therefore, that in relating a dispute, a Man can do no more than rehearse all that was essential in it, or plausible in the Adversaries Objections, together with the several Answers and Replies upon those occasions, and thus much exactly will plainly appear to be done in mine. It is true, I did not burden my Paper with a great many superfluous expressions, as he hath been pleased to do by his. But I have not dissembled, or concealed any passage that was considerable upon the Subject, or had the face of probability in the things he charged me with. Monsieur de Condom, I said, *did with abundance of Exaggeration, compare the Protestant's separating, to that of the Ancient Hereticks, of the Arians, and the Macedonians, who had set up new Churches.* Let his own Relation be perused, where he hath inserted whatever he pleased,

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pleased, and then judge whether these four words do not contain all that was material in the point. What need was there for me to take any other notice of that exceeding lavishment of words which attended so very little matter, than to give it the name of Exaggeration? To what purpose should I, merely for the entertainment of my Readers, reckon up particularly a long train of words perfectly useless and ill employed, of which this Exaggeration consisted? This, I confess, I never thought myself obliged to do.

For the Confusion I mentioned in this part of the Conference, I will not contradict M. de Meaux; but for all that, what I wrote upon this occasion is every syllable of it true. The company rose, part of the standers by went off, M. de Meaux then spoke a great deal, without allowing himself time to hear the answers that were made; he talkt with a great deal of heat, and many digressions; the Discourse was no longer what it had continued till then, I mean regular and composed, each person speaking without interruption, and hearing quietly in his turn; In short, there was no Method observed afterwards. If *Mademoiselle de Duras* was more attentive now than before, this is more than I know: Possibly the noise awakened her attention.

But let that be as it will; this very M. de Meaux, who complains of me for passing over this part of the dispute *in four words*, does both in his Relation, and his Reflection, pass it over without so much as one single word, or saying any thing at all, of three Considerations which I offered against the Parallel he drew between the *Protestants* and Hereticks heretofore, and the Conclusion he inferred from thence, That we had set up a new Church. For I observed to him on the one hand, the injustice of such proceedings, which without any regard at all to Reason or Truth, continually gave the Cause to the strongest side; On the other hand, I made it appear, that his prejudices did by a manifest illusion confound false Antiquity with true, by supposing, that if it could be said to any Exterior Society, *You were not yesterday the same you are to day*, this was enough to prove that Society false and novel. I shewed him further, of how mighty dangerous consequence that prejudice of his was, in that it utterly took away all the means of putting a stop to the progress of Errors and Superstitions, upon pretence of not setting up a new Church. All this may be seen in my Relation, Page M. de Meaux, instead of giving this account in his, brings me in making the pleasantest figure in the world. He makes me there most impertinently confess (with a, *One might, said Mr. Claude,*) a thing utterly false, and which I all along asserted to him, he could never prove. He denies there another plain matter of fact, without offering any other reason for that denial, but

Ibid. Supr.

Page 45.
comp.
with the
French.

this, *Ha Sir, 'tis what I shall never believe*; and hereupon he makes me hold my peace, and rest satisfi'd. He traverses there a great many things very foreign to our business, and the *Question*, and invents a passage of his own head, making me say after an apish trifling manner, *Ha Sir, what Praying to Saints, and Purgatory?* He argues there at a wild extravagant rate against our Separation, upon principles which he knows well enough we deny, without allowing me to take the freedom of telling him, *I did not agree to them.* He draws there throughout, his own Character and Representation, like that of a Conqueror, in pursuit of a flying Enemy, and continually holding his Sword at the back of him, and makes me ever now and then turn back my head as it were to speak one poor word. In short, the air of his Relation in this Part hath something in it so very odd, and so disagreeable to the gravity of this Prelate, that it is its own Confutation; and I could have been very well satisfied to have left it to its own weakness, had not M. de Meaux his unjust complaints oblig'd me to speak something concerning it.

I had added also a fourth Consideration, which was, That the *Protestants* behaviour in separating from the Church of *Rome*, was very like that of the Apostles of Jesus Christ, with respect to the Jews and Pagans; and that, as M. de Meaux upbraids us now, with not being join'd in Communion with any body that was before in being; with being Innovators, with having deserted the Communion of all Christian Societies; in the very same manner did those Jews and Pagans upbraid the Primitive Christians, telling them, that they were Preachers of new Doctrines, that they were not joyn'd to any body before in being, and that they had deserted the Communion of all the World.

It concerns us now to enquire, whether the truth of this Consideration will bear a dispute; and whether, granting it to be true, it must not be confess'd, that it shames and confounds the deceitful Parallel objected to us, between the modern *Protestants* and ancient Hereticks. Let us now for the clearer illustration of the matter, take up M. de Meaux's own Argument, as he himself hath given it to us in this most triumphant part of his Relation, and try if my four words are not enough to overthrow all the four and twenty pages written by the Bishop upon this occasion.

Meaux's
Eng. Conf.
p. 46.

It may be objected to your Church, says he, *Did you find one in the whole world to which you joyned your selves? Did you embrace the Greek, the Armenian, or the Ethiopian Church, when you forsook the Roman? Can we not mark you the precise date of your Churches, and say to all that Church, to all that exterior Society in which you are Minister, you were not yesterday?* I must confess this discourse astonish'd me; for a Man need but change the

the words never so little, and they will be applied full as well to the Church of the Apostles. Did you find one in the whole world, would the Jew say, to which you joyned your selves? Did you embrace the Church of Alexandria, Samaria, or Babylon, when you forsook that of Jerusalem? Can we not mark you the precise date of your Churches, and say to all that Church, to all that exterior Society, in which you are an Apostle, You were not yesterday?

M. de Meaux brings in Mr. Claude here saying, *Were we not of this Church? We went not, we were driven out of it. We were Excommunicated in the Council of Trent. Thus we went forth, but we carried the Church with us.* Whereupon he adds, *What discourse is this, Sir? If you had not been driven out, would you have staid in it? To what purpose then is that Command so often repeated amongst you, Go forth of Babylon, my people? What hath the Jew more to do upon this example given him by M. de Meaux, but to bring in a Christian saying to him, Were not we of the Jewish Church? We went not out, we were driven out of it. We were excommunicated by the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem. Thus we went forth, but we carried the Church along with us.* To this the Jew would naturally reply, *What discourse is this Sir? If you had not been driven out, would you have staid in it? To what purpose then is that Command so famous among you, Save your selves from this untoward Generation? And why did your Paul forsake the Synagogue of Ephesus, separate his Disciples, and set up Congregations apart by himself?*

M. de Meaux carries on his discourse, *Well Sir, (says he) it is true, you were driven out, This is common to you with all Hereticks. The Church in which they received Baptism cast them forth, excommunicated them. They would perhaps have willingly staid in it to corrupt and seduce, but the Church cut them off. And, as to what you say, That you were in this Church, which cast you out, and that you carried the Church with you, What Heretick may not say as much? Is not this exactly a Lesson for a Jew? Well, will he say, it is true you were driven out, This will be common to you with all your Hereticks. The Church in which they received Baptism, will excommunicate, and drive them out, as that in which you received Circumcision hath driven out and excommunicated you. You would perhaps have willingly staid in it, to stir up sedition among all the Jews throughout the World, but the Synagogue cut you off. And as to what you say, that you have carried the Church with you, Which of your Hereticks will not be able to say as much?*

The Ancient Hereticks, proceeds M. de Meaux, were all able to say as well as you, *That they were condemned by their Adversaries; for they were not made to sit amongst the Judges, when their Novelty was condemned. All your Hereticks, will the Jew say, are able to say as well as your Primitive Christians, that they were condemned by their Adversaries; and as your Apostles were not made*

Ibid.

Acts 2.40.

Acts. 19.

Ibid.

Ibid.

to sit amongst the Judges when their Novelty was condemned, so neither do you make your Hereticks sit as such.

Ibid.
Page 46.

M. de Meaux goes on. But, replied Mr. Claude, we agree not with this Novelty. What is in the Scripture, is not new. Patience, Sir, I beseech you, said I to him. None of the ancient Hereticks agreed the Novelty of their Doctrine, they all alledged the Holy Scripture for themselves: But there was one Novelty which they could not deny, to wit, That the Body of their Church was not yesterday, and you granted it. See here again the Jews plea exactly. But, will he say, You agree not this Novelty? St. Paul on the contrary affirms, that he Preached none other, than what Moses and the Prophets had foretold should come. Patience, I beseech you, none of your Hereticks will agree the Novelty of his Doctrine, they all alledge Scripture for themselves. But there is one Novelty, which neither you, nor they can deny, to wit, That the body of your Church was not yesterday.

Must not M. de Meaux now reflect with something of dissatisfaction, upon his having put weapons into the hands of Infidels, to fight against Jesus Christ's Church withal? And having utterly incapacitated himself for defending the Christian's cause against the calumnies of these wretches? He made it his business to overthrow us, and never perceived that the same blow he meant for us, does also strike at the Holy Apostles, and the Church which they gathered together. He imagined, that the ranking us with Hereticks, and drawing up the same charge against us, would be matter of shame and confusion, and render us odious in the eyes of the World; and he hath by doing so, given us the mighty comfort of being put in the same rank with the first believers of Christianity. I say the mighty comfort, for when we are reproached and upbraided only with such things as might as well have been objected against them; when they are fain to borrow the words and accusations of Infidels, to draw up an accusation against us, we will not only bear the misfortune patiently, but we will make our boast of it, and be thankful to Almighty God for it.

It is true, M. de Meaux is not satisfied we should quietly enjoy the honour he hath done us. Besides the Arguments he offered against it in the Conference it self, and which were answered by me then upon the spot, he hath thought fit to add here some fresh considerations, which it will concern us to examine. In the first place, he observes to us, that Jesus Christ, who was authorised himself, had no need of any Succession to make himself believed. This is without dispute; But then why may we not acknowledg the same priviledg due to Jesus Christ's Gospel too? Hath this Divine word any need of Succession to give it Authority; and on the contrary, let Errors and Superstitions shew never so long a Succession, though it be of Thirteen or Fourteen hundred years standing, are they the

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Refl. p. 89.

the less dangerous, or do they not as much deserve to be rejected upon that account? The Gospel of Jesus Christ is heavenly by its own nature, it receives no accession by a succession of several Ages, nor any diminution by such a succession being interrupted; and as as for Errors, they being the Tares which the Enemy hath cast into the Lord's Field, upon the good Corn, I own there may some of them be found of very long continuance, but their Antiquity though never so considerable, cannot have been from the beginning, nor alter the condition of their nature. *A Custom without Truth, says St. Cyprian, is but an old Error.*

But let us attend to M. de Meaux. He tells us, That Jesus Christ, to inculcate to us how necessary it is, for the true Religion to have a Succession always manifest, would, at his coming into the World, find there a Church actually subsisting in its whole State; that he was born, and lived in this Church actually subsisting; that is, in the Synagogue. Was there ever any thing said less to the purpose than this? Jesus Christ was born in a Church actually subsisting; I agree to it; but this was in a Church infected with abundance of Errors. In a Church full of pernicious Maxims and practices; by M. de Meaux his own confession, in a Church, whose Assemblies were not infallible. If this Prelate will be satisfied, we should say as much concerning the *Latin Church* at the time of the Reformation, we are immediately agreed. It was a Church actually subsisting, but a Church that stood in need of being reformed; a Church, whose Assemblies were not infallible, and consequently a Church, whose decisions men were not bound to rest satisfied in without examining.

Moreover, might not the *Jews* at the time when Jesus Christ went about to reform that *Jewish Church*, say the same thing to him, which this Prelate does to us, *Your Reformation was not Yesterday?* To alledge against this Objection, the examples of *John Baptist*, *Anna the Prophetess*, *Simeon*, and some others, who did not partake in the publick Corruptions of the Synagogue, (as M. de Meaux does) is only to urge some private persons, and those a very few too, who not appearing openly, nor making a separate body, could not be sufficient to shew such an Exterior, and constantly visible Succession, as M. de Meaux requires and holds to be necessary, for the preventing this Objection, *You were not Yesterday.* Or, if so inconsiderable a number of private persons be enough to prove the succession now in debate between us, he must needs be sensible, that the Protestants can produce at least as many in behalf of their Cause, and so by this very allegation, he overthrows his own charge of Novelty against them.

Besides this, it is very sure, the Body actually subsisting, in which Jesus Christ was born, and lived, could not be called the true Church of God, any otherwise than with respect to those particular persons, who might

Ep. 47.

Engl. Re-
flect. p 89.Meaux's
English
Conf.
page 19.

might still live, and consult their own Salvation, under a Corrupt dispensation, by severing the clean from the unclean. For, as I said in another place, it is not at all probable, that God would conduct his own Children to Everlasting life by such ways, as the pernicious Maxims and Practices which prevailed under that dispensation. Now this is the express case of the *Latin Church* before the Reformation; she could not any longer be lookt upon as God's true Church, except with relation to those private persons who lived under her Ministry, and yet did not partake in her superstitions and errors. So that if this would justify the Apostles, in saying, *Our Church is not Yesterday, nor to-morrow day, it is not new.* The Protestants may plead the very same thing, and M. de Meaux hath not hitherto advanced any Argument that makes our case different from that of the Primitive Christian Church.

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He proceeds and says, *That the Apostles persisted publicly in the Service of the Temple, which was then the most Authentical Mark of Communion. That they were not indeed seen, whatever might be ordained against them, to have ever withdrawn from it, as long as the Temple was in being, and the Synagogue could keep either its exterior form, or, even any appearance of its ancient state: That God, who would, in fine, have his Children entirely separated from the Jews, had first extinguish'd in this ungrateful People, by a manifest Reprobation, with the Sacrifice and Priesthood, all the Marks of the Church; so that 'tis apparent, the Synagogue with its Temple fell to ruine, before the Children of God departed from it.*

But M. de Meaux is mistaken both in the matter of fact, and in the reason of the thing. He mistakes the fact; for although the Apostles did not at the very first utterly forsake the Temple, yet they did make an actual, true, and positive separation, before ever the fall of the Temple, and the Synagogues, happened.

This may be proved by several undeniable Arguments. The first is, their Assembling together, sometimes indeed in the Temple, but sometimes too by themselves out of the Temple, and the Synagogues. *They continued stedfastly,* says St. Luke, *in the Apostles Doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in prayers. They continued daily with one accord in the Temple,* says the same Historian, *and breaking Bread from House to House.* And a little after, *And daily in the Temple, and in every House, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.* By this breaking of Bread, as even our Adversaries themselves have explained it, is meant the celebrating, and communicating in the Eucharist, which was then done in Congregations met in private Houses, and could not be done in the Temple. In like manner it is said, *Act. 20.* that on the First day of the Week, the Disciples, that is, the Believers at *Troas*, met together in an upper Chamber, that Paul did there preach to them, communicate with them, and continue his speech to them all Night.

Act. 2.42.
Ibid. v. 46.
Act. 5.42.

V. 7, 11.

It appears further by the same History, that, although the Apostles did not scruple going into the Synagogues to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ there, nevertheless, when the *Jews* grew obstinate, and withstood the Word, the Apostles departed from them, and made choice of other places, for them and the Church to meet in. Thus St. Paul did at *Ephesus*, he went at his first coming thither into the Synagogue, and disputed there for the space of Three months, and there converted many to the Faith; But when divers were hardened, says St. Luke, and believed not, but spoke evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the Disciples, disputing daily in the School of one *Tyrannus*. And this continued by the space of Two years.

Act. 19.
9, 10.

But the most unanswerable demonstration, that the reason of their going still into the Temple, and Synagogues, was not because they still held communion with the unbelieving *Jews*, is, their setting up in every place Churches, which made distinct bodies; Churches which had their Pastors, different from those of the *Jews*; their Deacons, and in a word their whole Constitution and Government quite and clean distinct from that of the Synagogues. This is made out by the Fourteenth Chapter of the Book of Acts, where it is said, That after Paul and Barnabas had preached the Gospel in the City of *Derbe*, they returned to *Lystra*, and *Iconium*, and *Antioch*, and by the advice of the Assemblies, ordained them Elders in every Church; that is, Pastors, and prayed with fasting. Nay, even in *Jerusalem* it self, which was the very Center of the Jewish Communion, the Christians had besides their Apostles, their Priests, or Elders, and their Deacons, who met with the People, not only for the Exercise of Religious Duties, but for other business besides, and to compose any differences that might happen, as well in matters of Doctrine, as Discipline, and Methods, of Government. There it was, that the first Assembly was held, which determined the difference between the *Greeks* and *Hebrews*, concerning the *Grecian* Widows, who thought themselves neglected in the daily Ministrations; there the first Council was held likewise, in which the Apostles, the Elders, and the whole Church assisted, upon the Question started at *Antioch*, concerning the observance due to the Ceremonies of the Law.

V. 21, 23.

Act. 16.

Act. 15.

Lastly, So far were they from a perswasion, that they ought to continue in Communion with the unbelieving *Jews*, that in this very Council they gave the converted *Gentiles* a perfect liberty from observing the Law of *Moses*. Why, says St. Peter, Will ye tempt God to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Disciples, which neither our Fathers, nor we were able to bear? And in vindication of this freedom it is, that St. Paul disputes with so much vehemency in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, against some false

Act. 15.
10.

M

Teachers

Gal. 2.11,
14.

Teachers who endeavoured to bring the Disciples into bondage under those Ceremonies again. *Upon this account he withstood St. Peter to the face, saying to him, If thou being a Jew livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* Words that plainly shew St. Peter himself to have been at that time no observer of the Jewish Rites.

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Where can it be then that M. de Meaux found out, that the Apostles continued in Communion with the Synagogue, so long as the Temple subsisted? They held their Assemblies apart, they set up distinct Churches, and convened Councils apart. These Churches had their Sacraments distinct, their Ministers and Pastors distinct, and their Government distinct. They discharged their Proselytes from the practice of the Law, they did not observe it themselves, and all this long before the fall of the Synagogue. When can a man desire more particular and express, to denote an actual separation, and breach of Communion?

Rom. 11.

But, says this Prelate, *The Apostles persisted publicly in the Service of the Temple, which was then the most Authentick mark of Communion.* He is mistaken here in the Reason of the thing, as he was before in the matter of fact. If the Apostles did not at first forsake the Temple, this was for other Reasons very different from that which he fancies to himself. They made the use they did of it, with a design to gain more convenience, and better opportunities of preaching the Gospel of Christ to the Jews, whom in the first place it must have been preached to. They did it to draw off that Remnant according to the Election of Grace, mentioned by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, from the midst of that lost Communion, with greater ease. They did it, to discharge their duty to Godward in giving this rebellious and unthankful People, the several warnings and summons which his Justice was pleased to order should go before their last dreadful Ruine. They did it, to testify by this behaviour, the regard and veneration they had for the Blood of Abraham, and for the Covenant of God made with his People; who, though already fallen into the deepest and most heinous of all sins, yet was still within a time, and state of vocation. Lastly, This was to pay their last duties and respects to their miserable Country, whose final Condemnation now drew near, and which stood just upon the brink of Ruine, just as we attend upon dying men, till they have fetcht their very last gasp, and upon their bodies when dead too, till they are laid in the Grave.

But now to imagine from hence, that they still maintained Communion with wicked men and unbelievers, and that they publicly profess the same Religion with them, after that they had crucified the Lord of Glory, and declared their obstinate perseverance in this fault, is what can never be said,

said, without great and manifest injury to the blessed Apostles of Jesus Christ. I confess they did still practice some particulars of the Legal service upon occasion; thus we read that *Paul* circumcised *Timothy*, and bore part of the Charges with four men, that had a *Nazarite's* vow upon them: But this was nothing less than an Argument of Communion with the unbelieving *Jews*. In the beginning of Christianity, those Ceremonies of the Law were as yet indifferent as to their use. Their having been instituted by God at first, and it not being possible to abolish them, but by little and little, till that were done, they might very innocently practice some of them, when prudential Reasons, and Christian Charity obliged them to it, as did *St. Paul* then, who was advised by *St. James* to act as he did. What they did then in this case, was neither done in favour of the unbelieving *Jews*, nor to signify their holding Communion with them, but merely to avoid giving offence to weak Christians, who could not all of the sudden shake off these Ceremonies, nor perfectly get loose from the prejudices birth and education had rooted in them. The same thing must be said of Jesus Christ's eating and drinking after his Resurrection, which was so far like this, that he did it not to satisfy any necessity of nature, or because he continued still to partake of the same animal life with other men; but he did it by way of condescension to the weakness of his Disciples Faith.

Acts 16.3.
Chap. 21,
24, 26.

What *M. de Meaux* further affirms, *That God had by a manifest reprobation extinguish'd in the people of the Jews, with the Sacrifice and Priesthood, all the marks of the Church, and left them no hope of being establish'd again*, is very true; but the addition which follows, *That 'tis apparent from hence, the Synagogue with its Temple fell to ruine, before the Children of God departed from it*, is a consequence depending merely on his pleasure. We have just now seen by plain proof, that the Children of God had already departed from it, before there was so much as any appearance of its ruine. After the Synagogue had been guilty of such horrible extravagancies, the Apostles could not in point of Conscience maintain Communion with it.

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Lastly, *M. de Meaux* resolving to drive on his notions as far as ever they can go, concludes, *That to the end such a fall of his heretofore chosen people, and the Divorce declared to the Synagogue, formerly his Spouse, might not give the least pretext of suspecting any like event in time to come, he had caus'd this future fall and Divorce, to be foretold by all his Prophets, as a singular example of his wrath; and had at the same time protested, that no such thing should ever befall that Church with which he had made an Eternal Covenant; that besides all this, and tho' the reprobation of the Synagogue was clearly explicated in the Scripture, and tho' the Apostles, without making any Innovation in*

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Pag. 89, 90

the Doctrine, did but follow him, who had till their time been always without any Interruption expected; nevertheless, because there was in this Action some rupture with the Synagogue, heretofore the true Church; to Authorise them in this, there was no less required than Jesus Christ himself, present on the Earth, with all the Authority of his Father: And in a word, to dissent from the Sentiments of the Synagogue, tho' besides convinced by the Scriptures, 'twas necessary that Jesus Christ the Corner stone, in whom all was to be united, should appear visibly on the Earth, with the incontestable marks of his Mission.

But how comes it to pass, I wonder, that this Prelate, so quicksighted and judicious at other times, should here content himself with such wretched Divinity as this? God never hath, nor ever will divorce his True Church. For this, consisting in his Elect, and true Believers, the unchangeable constancy of God's Election hath all along secured her from this unhappiness, as well under the Old, as under the New-Testament, and will for ever continue to secure her. The Synagogue which fell, was a Church only in Figure and Type, and such a one as God had only a temporal and external Covenant with; and this therefore having no fixed, everlasting foundation, fell as soon as the time appointed for its continuance was expired. But in this fall, the true Church, that is, in St. Paul's language, *The remnant according to the Election of Grace*, fell not; this always subsisted, and with it Jesus Christ's Church was united, not with the Body of the Synagogue. In this was its constant Succession, and true Antiquity; in this it was, that no new Church sprung up, but the old one was continued from *Abel* to that very time, and by this means all the calumnies of the *Jews* vanish into nothing, and all their imputations of being a Novel and upstart Church are taken off.

Under the New Testament God did not constitute any Typical or Figurative Church, as he had done under the old. *His Dove is one*, and consists of his true Believers only. Upon this account it is, that the Prophets never mention any second divorce, because in truth it is impossible there should ever be one. There can be no divorce, where there is not a temporal and earthly Covenant; But all here is Eternal, because all is real, everlasting, and spiritual. It is true, the Enemy scatters his Tares here among God's good Corn, but this neither makes a true Church, nor a typical one; for the typical Church was of God's own Institution, but these Tares are not so. They come by means of the Enemy, and are sown here by his hand, so that they make only a false and hypocritical Church, or, to use M. de Meaux his own expressions, a *Church counterfeited by Nature, or by the Devil*. So that when these Tares, that is, these Hypocrites and false Christians, who have only the

the profession of the true Faith, happen to deviate openly into Errors and Superstitions, this is not, in proper speaking, either a divorce, or a fall; because a Divorce supposes a Marriage, and a fall implies that the party once stood, neither of which can truly be said of these men. What is it then? 'Tis indeed only a manifest discovery of their hypocrisy, an effect of the blindness, levity, and corruption of men not regenerated by God, nor joyned to him by any good principle. And this is the true Reason why God foretold by his Prophets the fall of the Jewish people, and his divorce of their Synagogue, as a singular example of his wrath, and that he had protested nothing of that nature should happen under the New Testament; *viz.* That under the Old Testament there was a typical Church, of which God himself was the Author and Founder; whereas under the New, there was to be a spiritual Church composed of his Elect, and to be no other besides that.

These are the sound and exact notions given us in Scripture upon this Subject. And if *M. de Meaux* had considered them a little more carefully, he would have perceived all his Objections to fall immediately, and not have troubled himself as he has done, to tell us a great many things to no purpose, nor engaged in maintaining some others, which can never be made good. He would have perceived, that, as God's true Church under the Old Testament, subsisted still in the midst of all the Synagogue's confusions, tho these confusions had oftentimes very much darkned her, and made her scarce discernable by the eyes of men; she has also in like manner constantly subsisted in the New Testament, in the midst of all the disorders and confusions of the Tares, which have oftentimes covered her to such a degree, that she almost ceased to be visible. He would have perceived, that, as under the Old Testament this True Church consisted in some Elect only, which God had reserved to himself in the midst of the publick Corruptions, although these persons did not make a separate Body by themselves; so likewise under the New it hath all along consisted in the company of predestinated Believers, whom God hath preserved safe from the infection of a wicked World, tho they continued still in external Communion with others not so. He would have perceived, that, as the Church of the Apostles, tho it had no relation to the Synagogue, nor any other exterior body before in being, was not new for all that, because it was in Conjunction with those particular persons reserved of God; in like manner the Protestant Church, tho it have no relation at all to that vast croud of worldly and superstitious people, which make up the greatest number of the exterior body of the *Latins*, nor to the *Greek*, *Ethiopick*, or *Armenian* Societies, nevertheless is not a new Church, because united with those true Believers, which

which God reserved to himself in this body, notwithstanding the general corruption that invaded it; and by consequence, that there is nothing more false than this Principle, *That there is no way to avoid being a new Church, but holding Communion with some exterior body that had a Being before.* He would have perceived, that, as by this means the Calumnies of the *Jews* concerning the Apostle's Church being Novel, were refuted; so do we likewise by the same, answer those that upbraid our Church with novelty; so that this accusation cannot be made good against us, without abetting and giving Authority to that of the Infidels against the primitive Christians.

Pam. Not.
ad Cypr.
de mart.
Bellar. de
Rom. Pon.
lib. 13. c.
17. Petav.
Theol.
dogm. 1. r.
cap. 3, 4.

He would have perceived, that if the same thing might be said to the Hereticks of former Ages, this was often by accident only, not because they were Hereticks, but in that they were not the stronger party, and the greater number stood firm for the truth, which yet may sometimes change to the other side. From whence it follows, that this is an illgrounded prejudice, because it was as capable of being used against the Orthodox Christians, as by them against the Hereticks. Thus in effect the *Millenaries* might have objected once to the Orthodox, *You were not yesterday*, it being very certain, as *Pamelius*, *Bellarmin*, and many others have observed, that most of the Fathers for the three first Centuries were *Millenaries*. Even the *Arians* themselves, if we will take *Petavius* the Jesuit's word for it, might have made the same objection to *Alexander* Bishop of *Alexandria* when he condemned *Arius*, and to the rest of the Orthodox when they consented to that Condemnation. For this Jesuit reckons among the Ancients, that wrote amiss upon this subject, even before *Arius* his time, *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Tatian*, *Theophilus* of *Antioch*, *Irenaeus*, *Clemens Romanus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, *Methodius*, *Lucian* the Martyr, *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*; that is in short, almost all the first and most ancient Writers we have. Which, by the way, sufficiently shews, where that opinion may end at last, which some people are continually ringing in our ears, of the insufficiency of Scripture, and the necessity of Tradition. He would have perceived, that all his discourse upon the Synagogues fall, of the Divorce God had foretold by his Prophets, as a singular example of his wrath; of the ruine of his Temple, and the necessity of Jesus Christ's presence to warrant the forsaking of that Communion, are only weak and useless words; because all this does not any way hinder the Apostles Church from being new, and if no more than this be said, the *Jews* objection, *You were not yesterday*, will remain in full force still.

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He would have perceived, that the necessity of Jesus Christ's presence upon Earth, in order to make the deserting the Jewish Synagogue lawful, did depend upon a particular reason, which can be of no consequence or advantage at all to those of the *Latin* Communion; for this was therefore necessary, because, as I took notice before, the Synagogue was a typical Church, instituted formerly by God himself, and which therefore, by virtue of that Divine Institution, must continue till the manifestation of the *Messiah*, the substance and original of all the legal figures. But that under the New Testament the case is much otherwise with that rabble of Hypocrites, who are mixed in the same exterior Society with true Believers, because these are not of God's institution, but the enemies scattering; so that when they have once declared themselves opposers of the Truth, in any of the essential parts of Religion; nothing can oblige men to hold Communion with them any longer. It is therefore very poor arguing, to say thus, There was a necessity that Jesus Christ should personally appear in the World, to warrant mens forsaking the Synagogues Communion; therefore there is the same necessity that Jesus Christ should come down upon Earth once more, to justify mens withdrawing themselves from the Church of *Rome's* Communion.

Lastly, if *M. de Meaux* had applied himself a little more closely to the Consideration of his Subject, he would have perceived, that nothing more odd and strange, to speak but modestly and tenderly of it, could possibly be advanced, than what he tells us, *That to dissent from the Sentiments of the Synagogue, tho' besides convinced by the Scriptures, it was necessary that Jesus Christ should appear visibly.* What? Is this Prelate then of opinion, that, before Jesus Christ's appearance in the World, the Synagogues Authority was so absolute, that men were bound to adore even its very Errors and Corruptions, tho' she were convicted of these clearly and fully by the Scriptures? Does he think, that, for the retaining still some Communion with her, a Man were obliged to adopt all her Sentiments, that is, as *M. de Meaux* hath delivered himself, her *pernicious Maxims and Practices*? At what rate then does he prize the Truth of God, when he thus prefers a Lye, nay, a Lye plainly detected by the Scriptures, before it? A Synagogue convicted by the Scriptures, is at least in this respect, a Society in opposition to the Scriptures. In this opposition she is in the wrong, and manifestly so, because convicted of that Error. What authority soever she can have then, she abuses it, and employs it to ill purposes against God, and against her own duty. And yet notwithstanding all this, without the visible presence of Jesus Christ upon Earth, unless he vouchsafe to descend from Heaven in person, we must according to *M. de Meaux*, prefer this manifest abuse of her Authority, which the Synagogue is guilty of, before

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before all the Divine Authority that rules in the Scriptures; *To dissent*, says he, *from her sentiments, tho besides convinced by the Scriptures, 'twas necessary Jesus Christ should appear visibly*— Thus you see, how far blindness goes; you see how wretched a slavery they would have men truckle to, and how the spirit of the *Roman* Hierarchy would exalt, and extend it self.

I am really dissatisfied, for M. de Meaux his own sake, that he should conclude his *Reflections* upon our Conference, with so wild and extravagant a passage; a passage, in which the Authority of Gods Word is perfectly trodden under foot; in which the Scripture is degraded from all the Characters of its being Divine; in which Error is set up in the Throne, and the Majestick Excellence of Truth and Right, reproached and disgraced. But this God in his wise Providence hath thought fit to suffer, that if the strength and the evidence of Reason, and that Justice which I have endeavour'd to follow through this whole Book, fail to make the Impressions they ought to make upon mens hearts, yet at least the terrors of Conscience might influence them upon this occasion; and that such as are not sufficiently wrought upon by the charms of truth, might however be so by the horror and deformity of its contrary; so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ might eternally reign over us. Now to the only Wise, and only Infallible God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Ninth Reflection Examined, concerning the Notion of the true Church, to wit, whether it consist of true Believers only, or whether it be composed of wicked men, and Reprobates also?

Monsieur de Meaux, in the Advertisement before his Book, hath very judiciously observed, that the publick has nothing to do with such personal disputes as might arise between him and me concerning our Conference; and that *in these Alterations, the best course a prudent Reader can take, is to search into the bottom of Matters.* This advice ought to engage him, and me, to make this search for our particular parts, and for this purpose to range the dispute in such a method as may not impose upon the Readers, but such, as being most remote from Equivocation and Sophistry, may take the plainest and most compendious way of deciding the main point in Controversy. For this Reason, being about to examin M. de Meaux's Reflections, I chuse to begin with those which respect my Answer to his Discourse, where the bottom of the matter is the subject of the Debate, and then to come afterwards to those other, which relate to our Conference, and wherein we are more particularly and personally concerned. M. de Meaux, who hath himself made this distinction between them, had in my poor opinion done better to have laid them down in this order, because it is the order of time, and nature, which a Man cannot go from, without some danger of confounding Matters, and perplexing his Readers. I will enter therefore upon this examination, at the Ninth Reflection; the business of which is, to settle the notion of Jesus Christ's true Church, to which he has been pleased to make such wonderful gracious promises; for there indeed we ought to begin. So long as we are not agreed upon the very subject matter of our dispute, but have different Idea's of that, till we have illustrated the matter, and shewn which of these two is the truer and more natural, it may reasonably be said, not only that we dispute in the Air, and to no purpose, but that we dispute rather to lose and hide Truth, than to find or discover it more clearly to others. He and I are both of us concerned to avoid these imputations, which will be so much to our prejudice for our own sakes, besides that our concern for the Glory of God, and the Salvation of mens Souls, are motives of infinitely greater consideration.

The dispute between M. de Meaux and me is upon this point, Whether, after an Ecclesiastical Assembly hath decided matters of Religion,

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private persons are priviledged and obliged to examine those decisions? or whether they ought to acquiesce, and their Consciences rest fully satisfied, so submitting themselves blindfold to the supreme and absolute Authority of such an Assembly? M. de Meaux maintains the latter of these two, and I the former.

He grounds his Opinion upon this Principle, That the Church, to which Jesus Christ hath made all those Promises contained in the Gospel, as, that she shall endure for ever, shall be always visible, and never fail to vanquish the Gates of Hell, is that very visible and exterior Society, *which makes profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word*, and is composed of good and bad men, of elect and reprobate, of true believers and worldly persons mixt together. From which Principle he infers, That there being no Salvation to be obtained but in the Communion of this Church, and under her Ministry, there must be due from every member an entire submission to all the Doctrines taught by her, and that it is really a fault to pretend to examine them.

This Argument of M. de Meaux's is defective in the two main and most essential parts of an Argument, I mean both in its Principle and its Consequence. He first lays a false supposition, and afterwards draws a wrong conclusion from it. I say, it is defective in its Consequence, because, tho' we should allow his supposition to be true, to wit, that Jesus Christ's Church did consist of all this exterior visible body, made up of good and bad men, yet would it not in the least follow from thence, that men were not under an obligation to examin the decisions of Assemblies. For, not to urge, that our Faith depends upon God and his Oracles immediately, and not upon any human Authority whatever, according to that of St. Paul, *That faith cometh by hearing, and that by the word of God*: M. de Meaux knows well enough that very many eminent Doctors of his Communion are of an opinion directly contrary to his pretended conclusion. They tell us, it is very possible for the greatest part of this exterior body, which goes by the name of the Visible Church, to fall into Errors contrary to the true Faith. That this may happen, not only in respect of the People, or Laity, but even to the Prelates, the Cardinals, and the very Pope himself; so that the greater number of those that make up the Assemblies, and who are the Masters of their Decisions, may become Hereticks. They affirm withal, that, notwithstanding all this, the Church still continues to be preserved in those few who keep the true Faith, and that in these few, Jesus Christ's Promises shall be fulfilled, for that these alone, in such a case, compose the True Church of our Saviour. Now who does not perceive the Consequence

Rom. 10.

sequence of this to be, that the decisions of such Assemblies ought to be examined, because the Assemblies may become heretical ones, which is expressly contrary to what M. de Meaux pretends?

However, to avoid burdening this dispute with over many questions, I thought it was enough to deny M. de Meaux his Principle, and to confront it with another of mine; from which I infer a quite contrary Conclusion, without insisting upon the proof of his Consequence. My Principle is, that in this exterior or visible Society, *which makes profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his word*, and is composed of good and bad men, the good men, and true Believers only are to be look'd upon as Jesus Christ's true Church, to which he made all his Promises; and that the wicked and worldly men, who are prevailed upon to make this profession, only by temporal ends and advantages, being no members nor parts of this true Church, have not any right or part in Jesus Christ's Promises. From this Principle I inferred, that since this mixture of good and bad was not in the common people, or Laity only, but also in the body of Pastors, of whom the Assemblies are composed, it might happen, that the decisions, which are always carried by the most voices, shall be, not the decisions of the true Church, but of worldly men and hypocrites; so that no man can be informed of this sufficiently, for the safety of his Conscience, any other way, than by examining the decisions themselves; and therefore each particular person is both priviledged and obliged to examin them, that he may not hazard his Salvation upon bare presumptions, which, before examination, have no other ground to go upon, than the majority of voices, and consequently must needs be very uncertain.

These are our two several Hypotheses. M. de Meaux is for our receiving the decisions of Assemblies without examining them at all, because, says he, they are the decisions of the true Church; and I am of opinion, they ought to be examined, to know, whether they be in truth the decisions of the true Church or no. From whence it is plain, that the principal point we ought to begin with, is that question, What is the just notion of the True Church of Christ? that is, whether it consists of all those, whom outward profession hath gathered together into one and the same exterior Society, good and bad men indifferently, as M. de Meaux thinks? or whether it do not consist of the true Believers and Them only, as I assert?

Upon this Consideration it is, that M. de Meaux, in the very beginning of the Instructions he gave *Mademoiselle de Durus*, endeavoured first to possess the mind of his new Profelyte, with an Idea of the Church, agreeable to his pretensions. *All Christians*, said he to her, *by the name*

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of the Church, understand a Society, making profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word. He likewise assured her, That this was the proper and genuine signification of the word Church, such as was known by every one, and used in common discourse. He likewise endeavoured to prove this to her, by our acceptation of it, in our Liturgies and Confession of Faith, as well as the use of it in Scripture. And at length he concluded, that it was to this Church, that Jesus Christ's Promises did belong, and that a full and entire submission was owing to what should be decreed in her Assemblies.

This notion of the Church it was, that I opposed in the second Enquiry of my Answer to his Discourse, where, as hath been already seen, I established two points, and as I thought, by Arguments conclusive enough. The one, that true Faith, true Piety, and true Regeneration, do essentially belong to the Church, and must of necessity be taken into the definition of the Church. The other, that wicked men and hypocrites, tho they make never so much profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern themselves by his word, cannot be admitted into this definition. My present business is to examine, what M. de Meaux hath offered to the contrary, in his Ninth Reflection.

Eng. Re-
flect. p 95.

His whole discourse may be reduced to three particulars. He accuses me for having misunderstood Bellarmin's and Perron's opinions concerning the Church, when I taxed them with making such a Church, as that there was no inward virtue necessarily required to constitute it, but only the outward profession of the Faith, and participation of the Sacraments. One may believe, says he, by his manner of judging my Sentiments, that he no better understood those of these illustrious Cardinal. He likewise taxes me with misapprehending his own opinions about this matter, and imposing upon him, as I had done upon Bellarmin and du Perron. And lastly, he explains to us his own true sense of the thing, and assures us, that according to him, *the Elect are the most essential part and strength of the Church*; although it contain also besides these Elect, *Dead, and Rotten Members*, which are the wicked men, and hypocrites in it. These three things I will examin in order.

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flect. p. 93.
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As to the first, whether I have understood the Opinions of Cardinal Bellarmin, and du Perron rightly, or no, when I say, They make a Church, whose whole Essence consists in mere outsidess and appearances, was a matter of Fact, which M. de Meaux might with great ease have made appear, by the very Passages of the Authors themselves; and I do not question, but if he had given himself the trouble to consult these before he wrote his Reflection, he would have spoken a little less confidently in the business. Observe how Card. Bellarmin explains himself upon

upon this Subject, in a Chapter entituled, *Concerning the Definition of the Church.* || *It is our Opinion, (says he) that there are not two Churches, but one only, and that this one and true Church, is a Company of Men linked together by the Profession of one and the same Christian Faith, and by Communicating in the same Sacraments, under the Government of their Lawful Pastors, and especially the Pope of Rome, Jesus Christ's only Vicar upon Earth.*

|| *Nostra autem sententia est, Ecclesiam unam tantum esse, non duas,*

& illam unam, & veram esse cœtum hominum, ejusdem Christianæ fidei professione, & eorundem Sacramentorum communione colligatum, sub regimine legitimorum pastorum, ac præcipue unius Christi in terris Vicarii, Romani Pontificis. *Bellarmin. de Eccles. Lib. 3. Cap. 2.*

This Definition does not seem to make very much for M. de Meaux. One Assembly of Men, one Profession of the Christian Faith, one Communion in the same Sacraments, one Submission to the Pope of Rome; what is there in all this, that is not exterior? But mark what follows. ∴ By this Definition, says this Cardinal further, *it is easy to know, who they are that belong to the Church, and who do not belong to it. For this Definition hath three parts, the Profession of the true Faith, the Communion of the Sacraments, and Subjection to the Pope of Rome, as the Lawful Pastor. The first of these excludes all the Infidels, both those who never were of the Church, as Jews, Turks, and Pagans; and also those who have been of it, and are gone out from it, as the Hereticks and Apostates. The second excludes the Catechumens, and excommunicated Persons; for the first of these are not yet admitted to Communion in the Sacraments, and the others are driven away from them. The third excludes Schismaticks, who have the Faith, and the Sacraments, but do not live in Submission to their Lawful Pastor; so that they make Profession of the Faith, and receive the Sacraments without the Church. All other sorts of Persons whatever are contained in this Definition, altho they be Reprobates, Profligate, and wicked Men.*

∴ Ex quâ definitione facile colligi potest, qui homines ad Ecclesiam pertineant, qui vero ad eam non pertineant.

Tres enim sunt partes hujus Definitionis. Professio ve-

ræ fidei, Sacramentorum communio, & subjeçtio ad legitimum Pastorem, Romanum Pontificem. Ratione primæ partis, excluduntur omnes Infideles, tam qui nunquam fuerunt in Ecclesia, ut Judæi, Turcæ, Pagani; tam qui fuerunt, & recesserunt, ut Hæretici, & Apostatæ. Ratione secundæ, excluduntur Catechumeni, & Excommunicati, quoniam illi non sunt admissi ad Sacramentorum Communionem, isti sunt abmissi. Ratione tertię excluduntur Schismatici, qui habent fidem & Sacramenta, sed non subduntur legitimo Pastori, & ideo foris profitentur fidem, & Sacramenta percipiunt. Includuntur autem omnes alii, etiamsi reprobi, scelesti & impiis sint. *Bellarmin. Ibid.*

These terms are clear and decisive. The Essence and Nature of the Church does not according to this Definition, exclude the Elect; but so neither does it exclude the Reprobates out of it, it does not quite cast off the Righteous; but so neither does it reject the Wicked and Profligate: It bears with the true Faith, and it also bears and can be reconciled

† Atque
hoc inter-
est inter
sententi-
am no-
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alias om-
nes, quod
omnes a-
liæ requi-
rent inte-
rim virtu-
tes ad con-
stituen-
dum ali-

reconciled with Ungodliness; that is to say in short, That, according to Cardinal Bellarmin's Notion, the Elect and Righteous are not one jot more essential to the Church, than the Wicked and Reprobates. But let us proceed a little further yet, † *There is*, saith he, *this difference between our Opinions, and that of all other People, that all besides us require internal Graces and Virtues, as necessary to make any man a member of the true Church; and for this Reason, they make the true Church Invisible; but we for our part, altho we believe that all Virtues, Faith, Hope, Charity, and the rest, are to be found in the Church; yet we do not think that any inward Virtue is necessarily required, but only an outward profession of the Faith, and communicating in the Sacraments; such as falls under the Cognizance of our Senses, and that this suffices to give a man the real Demonstration of a part or member of that true Church, spoken of in Scripture. For the Church is an Assembly of Men, as visible and palpable, as the Company of the People of Rome, or the Kingdom of France, or the Republick of Venice.*

quem in Ecclesiâ, & propterea Ecclesiam veram invisibilem faciunt; nos autem & credimus in Ecclesia inveniri omnes virtutes. Fidem, spem caritatem, & cæteras, tamen, ut aliquis aliquo modo dici possit pars veræ Ecclesiæ, de qua Scripturæ loquuntur, non putamus requiri ullam internam virtutem, sed tantum externam Professionem fidei, & Sacramentorum Communionem, quæ sensu ipso percipitur. Ecclesia enim est cætus hominum ita visibilis, & palpabilis, ut est cætus populi Romani, vel Regnum Gallicæ, aut res publica veterum. Ibid.

Hitherto he gives a Definition of the Church very express, well considered, and particularly explained, into which he does not take, either the true Believers, or righteous Persons, or the Predestinated; and being all the World knows, that men in giving a Definition, make it their business to comprise the whole Essence of the thing defined in few Words; it would be hard not to conclude from this of Bellarmin's, that he did not look upon the true Believers, nor the Predestinate, as any way essential to the Church, for this very reason, that he never mentions them at all in his Definition of it. The truth is, if the true Believers and Predestinate, be really essential to the Church, they must needs be so, either in regard of the matter, that is, the Persons whereof the Church must of necessity be composed; or in regard of the form, that is, the common band that joyns them together, and makes them to be the Church. Now, as for the matter of the Church, he makes this consist purely in Men, without any particular notice taken of Predestination, or true Faith. *It is*, says he, *a Company of Men, Cætus hominum.* And for the form, he does not only place it in things which are all of them external, as Profession of the Christian Faith, Communion of the Sacraments, and Submission of the Pope of Rome; but he goes further, and

and positively excludes internal Virtues, as things not at all necessary, *Non putamus requiri ullam internam Virtutum; We do not think that any inward Virtue is necessarily required.* And thus it is, that he includes within the Church, the Reprobate, the Profligate, and Ungodly Men, as parts of it, *Includuntur omnes alii, etiamsi reprobi, scelesti & impii sint.*

As for Cardinal du Perron, We find in his Reply to the King of Great Britain, one particular Chapter, the Title whereof, is, *Of the Definition of the Church, and in what Union it consists.* In the beginning of it, he makes a long Preamble after his way, that is, a very Enphatical one upon Definitions in general; where among other things he says, * *That a Definition is an Epitome and Abridgment of the full knowledg of any thing which is reduced, or contracted from the most extensive Consideration of the Effects and Accidents that attend it, to that which is precisely Essential to it. So that, just as in the Distribution of Numbers, which Philosophers propound to us for Types and Patterns of essential Forms; every Addition or Subtraction, tho it be never so small, alters the Essence and Character, and destroys the exact Species of that Number; In like manner, in the just turn of Words, and the due compass of Language, by which, as by an Horizon, the Essence of each particular thing should be bounded, every Addition or Omission of Words, ruins and destroys the Definition.* Afterwards, he blames the Protestants for giving sometimes too straight and narrow a Definition of the Church, in confining it to the Predestinated only; and sometimes too loose and general a one, in calling it, The Number of those that live in a Profession of serving God by Jesus Christ. At length, when he hath been at the pains to give his Readers this Preparation, and raised in them some hopes of receiving this exact and perfect Definition of the Church, which shall contain its whole Essence, and yet contain nothing but that; pray observe how he explains himself. || *In the first place, says he, we will demonstrate, that the Unity which constitutes the formal Essence of the*

* In this Chapter, the Cardinal after an elegant Comparison betwixt a Halcoyn's Nest, and a Definition, hath these words, La Definition est un Epitome, & un abrege de l'entiere Connoissance de chaque chose, laquelle se reduit, &c.

raccourcit de la consideration plus ample des effets, & des accidens, qui l'accompagnent, à ce qui est précisément de son Essence. De sorte que tout ainsi, qu'en la Distribution des nombres, que les Philosophes proposent pour types & Patrons des formes Essentielles, toute Addition, ou soustraction, quelque petite qu'elle soit, varie l'être, & le caractère, & détruit, l'espèce précise du nombre: Ainsi au juste tour des paroles & à la légitime circonférence du langage, dont l'Essence de chaque chose doit être bornée, comme d'un horizon, toute Addition, ou Obmission de mots mine, & détruit la Definition. Republique Au Roy de Grand Bretagne. Lib. 1. Cap. 8. Pag. 33. Edit. Paris, 1620.

|| Afterwards, having in his old Rhetorical way, compared these two Definitions, to the two Holes or Burrows of a Foxe's Kennel, which must both be set with Nets, if you would be sure to catch the Fox; he makes the following Promise to answer both Definitions; lest, while he stops one hole, the Hereticks should escape at the other. En premier lien, nous montrerons, que Church,

l' unite, qui constitue l' etre formel de l' Eglise, est celle de la Vocation extreme, & non celle de la Predestination, nide la foyinterne, ni de la Conjunction des Esprits par les Offices de la Charite, & des prieres mutuelles, ni de la Participation d' une me fine esperance. — Secondement, nous ferons voir, que cette Vocation en l' unite de laquelle consiste, la forme essentielle de l' Eglise, n' est pas la simple profession du nom de Christ, mais est la Vocation, (savoir exterieure) á salut, par les moyens justes & suffisans, qui sont la profession de la iraye foy, sincere Administration des Sacramens, & adherence aux Pasteurs legitimes. Or de cette Definition la premiere partie, á savoir, que la forme de l' Eglise consiste en l' unite de la Vocation extreme, & non en l' unite d' aucune condition invisible, nous la traiterons dans l' examen des trois Articles suivans, ou sa Majeste propose les Unions internes, es quelles elle pretend, que l' essence de l' Eglise puisse etre conservee. *Ibid.* Pag. 34, 36.

Church, is that of external Vocation, and not that of Predestination, nor inward Faith, nor the Conjunction of Souls by charitable Offices, and mutual Prayers, nor Participation of the same Hope. Observe, how mighty careful this great Doctor is before hand, to cast off all inward Virtues from the formal Essence of the Church. Secondly, proceeds he, We will make it appear, that this Vocation in the Unity whereof the Churches formal Essence consists, is not barely professing the name of Christ, but a Vocation (an outward one I mean) to Salvation, by proper and sufficient means, such as are the Profession of the true Faith, sincere Administration of the Sacraments, and adhering to lawful Pastors; so that the Definition of the Church will be the Society of those, whom God hath called to Salvation, by the Profession of the true Faith, sincere Administration of the Sacraments, and adhering to lawful Pastors. Now the first part of this Definition, to wit, that the form of the Church consists in the Unity of the external Vocation, and not in the Unity of the invisible Condition, we shall treat of in the Examination of the three following Articles, wherein His Majesty lays down the internal Unions, in which he pretends the Essence of the Church may be preserved.

I think I have now produced another very punctual definition of the Church; a definition, that takes no notice of the predestinate or righteous for any part of the matter whereof the Church is essentially and necessarily composed; but only of men externally called, *The Society of those, whom God hath called to Salvation by the profession, &c.* A definition, that lays down nothing else for the essential form of the Church, but a bare profession, *The profession of the true Faith, sincere Administration, &c.* A definition, which, according to its own Author's explanation, does really exclude Predestination, Inward Faith, Charity, and Hope, from the Essential form of the Church. A definition, consequently, which admits wicked men, profligate, and ungodly wretches, to be parts or members of the true Church, provided they do but continue in the unity of Profession, exactly, as Bellarmin's definition mentioned before did.

M. de Meaux now must give me leave to ask him the question, whether I understood the Sentiments of these two Cardinals aright, or not? I do not say they have made a Church, to which it shall be necessary and essential to be composed of hypocrites and wicked men: But I charge them with having made a Church, to which it is not necessary and essential to be composed of good men. I do not accuse them of having banished inward virtues utterly out of the Church; but I find fault with their not allowing those virtues a place in the formal Essence and definition of the Church. I do not say, they have actually composed the whole Church of wicked men and hypocrites; but I say, they have defined it after such an odd fashion, that it would lose nothing of its Nature and Essence, tho it were composed of such men entirely. Upon this consideration it was, I said, *That the Debate between us was, whether the Nature and Essence of the Church consisted altogether in mere outsides and appearances, or whether it did not besides, require something of Reality; whether hypocrisy, and a lying, deceitful, superficial holiness were sufficient to confer upon men the right of belonging to, and being members of the Church? or whether something of Truth ought not to be had in order to it? whether wicked men, worldlings and reprobates, provided only they made profession, and could counterfeit with dexterity, were in truth parts of Jesus Christ's mystical Body? or whether such a glorious privilege belonged to true Believers only?* Upon the same account I said, *That Faith and effectual Holiness were of the Essence and Nature of the Church, and not a mere profession only; That the Church must not be defined by a bare outward profession, but that true Faith and Regeneration must be taken into the Idea we form of it; That if the Unity, which constitutes the Church here upon Earth were no more than an Unity of profession, an external unity, and the internal one were accidental only, the unity of that in Heaven would be but external neither, and the internal one no more essential to that than the other; or, if it were otherwise, then there will be two different Churches.* Lastly, for the same Reason, I said, *That the two Cardinals, Bellarmin, and du Perron, made such a Church, as did not, in its Constitution, require any thing of inward virtue, but merely the outward profession of the Faith, and Communion in the Sacraments; a Church, whose unity, which constitutes its formal essence, is an unity of external vocation, and not either of Predestination, nor of inward Faith, nor of Conjunction of Souls by mutual offices of Charity; a Church, that is defined, not by believing and governing it self by God's Word; but by making profession to believe and govern it self by that Word: A Church, lastly, whose Essence would remain perfect and entire, tho there were neither any real believers, nor just persons in it; and which would still continue to be Jesus Christ's true Church, tho it were composed of hypocrites, and none else.*

M. de Meaux then must give me leave to ask him once more, wherein I misunderstood the *Sentiments of his illustrious Cardinals*? Does he mean, that defining the Church by outward profession only, that the not admitting inward virtues to be any part either of the matter or form of it, that the placing its formal unity in the external vocation, that declaring the thing which constitutes the Church is not any internal unity; does he mean, I say, that all this is not making the nature of it to consist in mere outsides, to reduce its essence to a bare profession, and allow it an inward unity only by accident? Or is not the plain Consequence of this, the making a Church, whose Essence would remain entire, tho there were not any true believers, or righteous persons in it; and would it not, tho composed of hypocrites, and none else, still continue to be the true Church of Jesus Christ, since even thus it would still be a society of men, united by the profession of the same Christian Faith, and by the Communion of the same Sacraments?

Continuat.
de la Nou-
velle De-
fense, l. II.
ch. 6.

It is a thing so generally held among the most common Writers of Controversy in the Church of Rome, that the Church consists of nothing that is internal; that M. Malet, one of our modern Authors, and since his death, famous for several Answers to his Writings, having found in a Note of the Mons Testament, this passage, *That Faith, Hope, and Charity are necessary for every Christian, and essential to the Church*, hath called this no better than an erroneous and seditious Doctrine. If Charity, says he, be essential to the Church, the sinner, who hath lost Charity will be consequently cut off from it, and the Church will be no more than the company of the Saints, which is the Error of the Pelagians, and modern Hereticks. And further, supposing a sinner to be no longer a member of the Church, the Popes, Bishops, and Priests, who continue in this state of sin, will lose all their right of governing the people, because not being any longer of the Church, they are not any longer Governors of it. Observe, proceeds he, how far this Annotation inserted by the Translators of Mons, unnecessarily, and of their own heads, will extend, which insinuates into the Reader this seditious Doctrine.

But it is also as generally taken for granted, that from hence it necessarily follows, the Church may be conceived as consisting of hypocrites, wicked men, and none others; and this Consequence M. de Malet's Answerer hath taken care to infer as well as I. If, says he, these virtues were not essential to the body of the Church, then the body of the Church might be conceived to remain entire, without Faith, Hope, and Charity: That is, A Man might suppose the true Church of Christ still in the World, and that the Gates of Hell had not prevailed against her, tho she were no more but merely a company of hypocrites, who while they make profession of the true Faith, have no such thing in their hearts; or such as had all of them driven away the Holy Spirit

Spirit from their Souls by a mortal sin; and an utter extinguishing all Charity. And can a greater injury be done to the Son of God, than to be of opinion, that such a company of people are still his Church? This is exactly the same thing I said, that it would be to make a Church, whose Essence might still be perfect and entire, tho there were no true Believers, nor Righteous persons in it; and that tho it were made up of Hypocrites, and none else, yet it would continue Jesus Christ's true Church. And yet sure it cannot be suspected there was any conferring of Notes, or secret Correspondence betwixt this Author and me.

But to return to *Bellarmin*; It is to no purpose to excuse this Cardinal, by saying with the Author of that Answer to *M. Malet*, that *Bellarmin* acknowledges in the Tenth Chapter of his third Book concerning the Church, * *That we have the assurance of a Divine Faith, that there are in the Church many persons who are really pious, true believers and predestinated, and that although there be in a Man's body Nails and Hair that have no life, it must not be concluded from thence, that the Body of a Man is nothing else but Nails and Hair.* For this Discourse of *Bellarmin* may very well mean, that we are assured some other way God calls his predestinated Children in the Church, to be True Believers in it, and the Essence of the Church is not at all repugnant to this; but it can never mean, that the True Believers, and predestinated persons are of the Essence of the Church, or at all Essential to the Church; as for instance, I may be very particularly assured there are Philosophers in the Kingdom, but the meaning of this is not, that those Philosophers are of the Kingdoms Essence, or any manner of way essential to it, because I may be assured of this some other way. And as for that Comparison of a Man's Body, should I define the Body of a Man so, as that my whole definition might very well agree with Nails and Hair, as his does agree perfectly with a company of Hypocrites; it is very certain, a Man might reasonably say, that, according to me, the living members would not be of the essence of the Body, and that the essence of the Body might continue perfect, tho it were compos'd of nothing else but Nails and Hair.

* *Certi sumus certitudine fidei divinæ, in eadem Ecclesiâ multos esse verè fideles, pios & electos, quemadmodum etiam in corpore humano inveniuntur & ungues, & capilli, qui non vivunt, & nemo tamen inde colligit, corpus*

humanum nihil esse, nisi ungues & capillos. Bellarm. de Eccles. Lib. 3. Cap. 10. sub finem Capituli.

It is further so evident, that, in this Cardinal's opinion, the True Believers are not of the Essence of the Church, that in the very same Book, Answering an Objection taken from the Title of *Holy*, being given to the Church, he makes a formal distinction between all those things that constitute the Church, and its prerogative of having True

* Respon-
deo, Ec-
clesiam
dici, &
verè esse
sanctam,
quia om-
nia quæ ad
ipsam con-
stituen-
dam per-
tinent, sunt
sancta.
Primò
Baptisma,
quod san-
ctum esse
nemo ne-
gare po-
test.

Secundò Professio Christiana, id est, fidei, morum, sive dogmatum, & præceptorum Christianorum, quam professionem sanctam esse, & solam ipsam esse sanctam, certissimum est. Nec enim Judæorum, Turcarum, Ethnicorum, Hæreticorum professio sancta est, sed solum professio Christianorum. Tertiò unio membrorum inter se, & cum capite, saltem externa & quoad ea, quæ ad religionem pertinent, quæ unio etiam sine dubio est sancta. — Dicitur etiam sancta propter sanctos, quos habet. *Bellarmin. Lib. 1. de Ecclesiâ Cap. 9.*

Eng. Refl.
p. 92.

Ibid.

Believers within it : * *The Church*, says he, is called, and really is *Holy*, because all the things requisite to the constituting her, that is, to her *Essence*, are *Holy*. Now three things are requisite to the constituting of the Church : First, *Baptism*, which no body can deny to be *Holy* ; Secondly, *The Christian Profession*, that is, the profession of *Faith and good Manners*, or if you please, of the *Doctrines and Precepts of Christianity* ; and it is certain too, that this *Profession is Holy*, and that no other is so besides it. For that of *Jews, Turks, Pagans, and Hereticks* is not *Holy*, but that of *Christians only*. In the third place, the union of the *Members with one another, and with the Head*, at least an external one, and in things pertaining to Religion, which union is likewise *holy without all dispute*. Here is all that he esteems essential to the Church. Afterwards he subjoyns, *The Church is called Holy too, by reason of the Holy persons in her*. So that to have *Holy persons* in her, is not in his opinion any thing that belongs to the *Essence and Constitution* of the Church.

I hope now, *M. de Meaux* will be so just, as not to tax me any more, with misunderstanding *Bellarmin's* and *du Perron's* Sentiments. But I hope withal, he will do me the same justice in not retracting what he hath said, *That this is indeed a frightful Idea of the Church, and that he does not wonder that Mr. Claude has an horror of it* ; for it is in truth a frightful one, and 'tis scarce possible for a Man to form one more so : But still it is the *Idea*, which his *Illustrious Cardinals* had, and, which is more, 'tis that which they give us, not as a thing peculiar to themselves in particular, but as the common opinion of their *Catholicks*, and set in opposition to the *Protestants Tenet*, as is evident, if men will but take the pains to read their Chapters. So that, if *M. de Meaux* persevere in maintaining *this Idea to be as far from the mind of all Catholicks, as Heaven is from Hell* ; he must place all *Bellarmin's* and *Perron's* *Catholicks* in Hell, and reduce his own to a very inconsiderable number, if he will lodge them in Paradise.

But it is time now to come to *M. de Meaux* himself ; and, because he must be considered with respect to two several times, either that, when he gave the Instructions to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, or that, when he wrote his *Reflections*, I will begin with the former of these, and make that

that the second Particular of this Examination. *I know not*, says he, *how Mr. Claude could read my Instructions, without seeing in them the clean contrary to what he imposes on me.* And, as for my part, I shall take the freedom to say, That I know not how I could have read them without discovering all that I have charged him with. I observe, that he follows the very steps of Bellarmin and du Perron in them, that he represents the true Church there, *to be a Society making Profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word*; that he does not by an Addition of his own, take notice of inward Virtues as necessary at all; that he avers all Christians understand the same thing that he does, by the word *Church*; that he puts a plain Distinction between his Church, and that of the Predestinate and Elect; in a word, that he will have it composed of wicked Men and Hypocrites, as well as good and righteous Persons. Look upon M. de Meaux thus far, and what other can you think of his Opinion, but that it treads exactly in the steps of his Predecessors; my meaning is, that he does not believe inward Virtues to be at all essential to the Church, nor that it is composed of true Believers only?

But, says he, *You will there find also, that the Elect, and the Saints, are the most noble part of it, that they are there sanctified, that they are there regenerated, often also by the Ministry of the Reprobate; that they must not be considered, as making a Body a part; but as making the fairest, and most noble part of it.* You will there find, *That the Doctrine of the Church continually brings forth Saints in her Unity; and that by this Doctrine, She instructs, and contains in her Bosom the Elect of God.* You will find there, *That if Hell cannot prevail against the visible and exterior Society of the Church; it is because it cannot prevail against the Elect, who are the purest, and most spiritual part of this Church.* You will find there, *That the effect of the Ministry is to bring the Children of God to the perfect Stature of Jesus Christ, that is, to Perfection; which, after it hath rendred them holy, will render them glorious, both in Body and Soul.* You will find there, *The exterior and interior Communion of the Faithful with Jesus Christ, and of the Faithful among themselves; the interior Communion by Charity, and in the Holy Ghost, who animates us; but at the same time the exterior Communion in the Sacraments, in the Confession of Faith, and in all the exterior Ministry of the Church.*

I acknowledg all this may be found scattered here and there, in M. de Meaux Writings; but still nothing of all this does import, that the inward Virtues are of the Essence of the Church, or that they ought to be taken into the Definition of it, or that it is composed of true Believers only, which is the matter we now contend about. This indeed does evidently infer, that he does not exclude the Elect and true Believers,

Eng. Refl.
pag. 92.

Eng. Refl.
pag. 92.

Pag. 93.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

but

but allows them a Room in the Bosom of the Church, and so he does not make it to consist entirely of Hypocrites and wicked Men. I grant it. *Bellarmin* and *du Perron*, say as much as this comes to. But this is no Argument, that it is essential to the Church to be composed of true Believers and the Elect. This is the very knot of the Question, and we must not go about to perplex our selves with Equivocations. There is a vast difference betwixt affirming, that there are Elect, and righteous Persons within the Church; and asserting, that true Faith, and true Righteousness, are of the Essence of the Church, or that the Elect and just Persons are essential to it. The former of these, *M. de Meaux* hath said in his Instruction, I agree he has, nor did I ever tax him with any thing to the contrary. But that he said the second, I utterly deny, and am ready to prove, that his whole Discourse to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, does naturally represent the Speaker to be a Person of *Bellarmin's* and *du Perron's* Opinion, That inward Virtues are not in the least of the Churches Essence; and consequently, that the Elect and the Just were not essential to it neither.

To evidence this, We need only consider the Notion he hath given us of the Church, to wit, That it is a *Society making Profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word*; for, if he had designed we should apprehend the Elect and the Righteous to be of the Essence of the Church, he would not have forgot to mention them. He would have said, It is a Society of elect or righteous Persons, making Profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern themselves by his word; or, if you please, a mixed Society of elect and reprobate, righteous and unrighteous Persons making this Profession. But, says he, *there was not any need, as Mr. Claude supposes, to give a perfect Definition of the Church, nor to prove her interior Union by the Holy Ghost, by Faith, by Charity.* If, when *M. de Meaux* said, *That Christians understood no more by the word Church, than a Society making Profession to believe the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word*; It was not his Intention to give a Definition of it; yet, however he hath given one very agreeable to that of *Bellarmin* and *du Perron*, as every one may plainly see by comparing them together; so that he gave very just occasion to believe, that was his Intention. And his own acknowledgment, that he designed hereby to shew the Churches Visibility, is a further Confirmation of this very thing; for both *Bellarmin* and *du Perron* expressly declare, That they give their Definitions on purpose to avoid making the Church Invisible. So that in regard they all make use of the same Notions, and have all done it with a tendency to the same end, it would have been mighty hard for me, to guess at this difference in their Intentions. When we see

men

men all carrying on the same design, and carrying it on in the very same methods too; it is very usual with us, to conclude their Intentions are the same also.

But, not to dispute of Intentions already past and private; I with M. de Meaux would tell us his Opinion of Bellarmin's and du Perron's Definitions of the Church, and whether he accept or reject them. If he accept them, 'tis to no purpose to say, he did not intend to define the Church; since, what he hath said, agrees exactly with these Cardinals Definitions. And if he reject them, he ought not to have said as he hath done, *That one may believe by Mr. Claude's manner of judging his Sentiments, that he no better understood those of those Illustrious Cardinals*, because their Sentiments being different from his, there can be no Consequence from the one to the other. Let him therefore tell us plainly, whether he be of Bellarmin's and Perron's Opinion, or not; because, if he be, he Espouses their Definitions, and gives me just occasion to believe, that in speaking as they did, he likewise had an Intention to define the Church as they had done; and if he be not, there was no reason for his making theirs and his own to be the same cause, nor to interweave his interest and concern with theirs.

Pag. 95.

I am so far from picking Quarrels upon mere terms, That if M. de Meaux desire it, I am ready to call what he said of the Church, not a Definition, but an Idea, a Description, a Notion, or any thing, what he will, provided I may likewise have leave to tell him, that if there were no need of delivering it perfect in every particular, there was need at least not to deliver it so liable to Exception, considering the use he pretended to make of it. Now such, I aver it to be, because it takes away the opportunities of discussing a Question, which might determine the main difference, which is really a captious way of proceeding. The main Controversy is, whether the Decisions of Assemblies ought to be examined, or received without any Examination at all. It is our Opinion, that the Question, upon which the Decision of that chiefly depends, is, whether the true Church consists of true Believers only? and yet this is exactly the Question, which M. de Meaux deprives his Proselyte of all opportunity of discussing, when he tells her at the very first, *That all that Christians understand by the word Church, is a Society making Profession to believe in Jesus Christ, and govern it self by his Word*; and afterwards he leads her out to take a prospect of its Visibility. There was no need therefore for M. de Meaux to say just now, That he did not make it his business to give a perfect Definition, for it was really his proper business, not only to lay down one, but also to do it in the
very

Eng. Conf.
page 3.

very beginning of his Instruction, because no man ought to be imposed upon.

We are agreed, says M. de Meaux, *of the Churches interior Union by the Holy Ghost, by Faith, and by Charity.* If we are agreed upon it, then he ought to restrain the Notion of the Church, to true Believers only, and perfectly exclude Worldly Men and Hypocrites, as the Protestants do, out of their Notion. But if M. de Meaux had done so, the main difference had been removed at the very entrance upon this Dispute. For if the Church do not consist of true Believers only, the Assemblies in which these Decisions pass, being intermixt with abundance of worldly and wicked Men; no body can be secure, that these wicked Men did not carry the decisive Voice, any otherwise, than as he may receive security from examining the Decisions themselves; so that consequently, men are bound to examine, and this is directly contrary to M. de Meaux his pretended Conclusion. But the truth of the matter is, that, whatever he may say of the thing, we are not agreed of this interior Union; for he understands his interior Union in this Sense, That in the Composition of the true Church, there are some true Believers, tho there be at the same time Hypocrites and wicked Men besides these; whereas we understand it in this other Sense, That in the Composition of the true Church, there are true Believers, excluding at the same time the wicked Persons and Hypocrites. Thus M. de Meaux plays with his Subject. Our Opinions in this case have a real and very material difference between one another; so that, if we would take the right course, his Instruction ought to have begun there, and not to have concealed from the Consideration of the Lady he instructed, a thing so important, and so necessary to be known, as this was, in order to informing her Judgment aright.

Eng. Refl.
page 93.

But it may be objected, M. de Meaux, however acknowledges now at last, that the Elect are essential to the Church. It is true, and this part therefore of his ninth Reflection remains to be examined. *We consider the Elect, as making the most essential part, and strength of the Church.* He never used this Phrase in his Instruction, but now he explains by this what he had said before, *That the Elect are the purest and most spiritual part of the Church.*

M. de Meaux must ever have a privilege of explaining his own words, how he thinks fit; but before we take this Explanation given us here into Consideration, I must intreat him, that he will allow us to offer two things to him. The one is, That if it be reasonable I should admit his Explanation, it is also reasonable, that this, like all new Lands, should not be of any free, but only from the time of its being notified; and consequently,

quently, that if I before that time interpreted his Words in (as I thought) the most natural sense, this must be esteemed his fault rather than mine. The second thing is, that let him understand his explanation how he will, it can do him very little service, so long as this question continues undetermined between us, whether hypocrites and wicked men be Members of the true Church, or not. Tho he had concluded a Thousand times over, that the Elect are essential to the Church, what would this signify to our main controversy, which is, whether the Decisions of Assemblies must be examined, or received without any more ado? He should have chosen another way, if he designed to advance but one step, to the end he propounds to himself. He should prove, that wicked men and hypocrites, who may compose Assemblies, and form Decisions, as well as others, let them be as wicked as they will, yet for all that are still of Jesus Christ's true Church; if he would deduce, as he might afterwards have done, his Conclusion from thence. Indeed it hath not only been observed, that, according to his principle, all the Essence of the Church is made to consist in an Exterior unity; but besides, which is a thing extremely contrary to the Truth of the Gospel, it hath been likewise observed, that the Church is made to consist of good and bad men promiscuously. It was not enough for him therefore to vindicate himself, as to the first of these; he must also clear himself of the second, otherwise he deserts his Principle, and consequently the main matter of his Dispute. For tho by this means, he should acquit his Principle of the fallity and odium, (which yet it shall by and by be made appear he hath not done) yet there would still be left enough to warrant our rejecting it, and utterly to evacuate whatever inferences he would deduce from thence, till he had established it better. He assures us, the Elect are essential to the Church. I grant it. But does he prove withal, that wicked men are really parts or members of this Church? Not any thing of it. Does he make it appear, that inward Faith and Regeneration are not necessary to qualify a Man for becoming a Member of the True Church? 'Tis a thing he never troubles himself about. Or however, does he answer the Arguments already produced to prove the contrary? No. Here then is ground enough in all reason to say, that he does not defend the Hypothesis of the Church of Rome; for that can be defended no other way, but this; that can be made to look plausible no other way but this.

If M. de Meaux will not take my word in the Case, let him at least believe his *Illustrious* Cardinal Bellarmin, who explains his sense of this particular in the following manner, in the Tenth Chapter of his Third

† Deinde,
si ii, qui
fide inter-
na carent,
non sunt,
nec esse
possunt in
Ecclesia,
nulla erit
inter nos
& hære-
ticos am-
plius quæ-
stio de Ec-
clesiæ visi-
bilitate;
proinde
(quod ego
certemag-
ni facio)
superva-
canæ e-
runt tot
eruditissi-
morum
hominum
disputa-
tiones, quæ
hactenus prodierunt. Omnes enim, qui hæcenus scripserunt, id obijciunt Lutheranis & Calvinistis, quod Ecclesiam invisibilem faciant: Nullam autem futuram amplius quæstionem, ita probo.

Lutherani & Calvinistæ signa visibilia quædam, & externa Ecclesiæ statuunt, nimirum prædicationem verbi Dei, & Sacramentorum administrationem; & constanter docent, ubicunq; hæc signa conspiciuntur, ibi esse etiam veram Christi Ecclesiam. Quia tamen solos justos, & pios ad Ecclesiam veram pertinere volunt, & nemo potest certo scire, qui sunt vere justis, & pii, inter tam multos, qui iustitiam, & pietatem exterius præ se ferunt, cum certum sit, multos ubiq; esse hypocritas, & falsos fratres: Idcirco nostri recte concludunt, eos facere Ecclesiam invisibilem. Porro, Lutheranis & Calvinistis iustitia in sola fide consistit, idemq; est apud eos, Ecclesiam esse cætum iustorum, & piorum, & esse cætum vere credentium; quis non igitur vider, nos cum illis plane convenire, si omnes illos ab Ecclesia excludamus, qui veram fidem in corde non habent?

Ad hæc, necesse est, ut nobis certitudine infallibili constet, qui cætus hominum sit vera Christi Ecclesia; nam cum Scripturæ, Traditiones, & omnia plane dogmata ex testimonio Ecclesiæ pendeant, nisi certissimi simus, quæ sit vera Ecclesia, incerta erunt prorsus omnia. At non potest certitudine infallibili nobis constare, quæ sit vera Ecclesia, si fides interna requiritur in quolibet membro, seu parte Ecclesiæ; quis enim certo novit, in quibus sit ista fides? Non igitur fides, aut aliquid aliud invisibile, & occultum requiritur, ut quis aliquo modo pertineat ad Ecclesiam. *Bellarm. de Eccles. Lib. 3. Cap. 10.*

Book concerning the Church. † If those that are without inward Faith, neither are, nor can be in the Church, our dispute with the Hereticks concerning the Churches visibility will fall to the ground: And consequently, which is a thing well worth consideration, the Controversial Writings of so many Learned men will be utterly useless. For all that have written hitherto against the Lutherans and Calvinists, object against them, that they make the Church invisible. Now, that this dispute must needs fall to the ground, I prove thus: The Lutherans and Calvinists, fix upon some certain exterior and visible marks of the Church, such as the Preaching of God's Word, and Administration of the Sacraments; and it is their constant Doctrine, that wheresoever these marks are found, there is the true Church of Jesus Christ. But, because they hold, that only the just and good men belong to the true Church, and that no Man can be absolutely certain which are really the just and good, among so many that have only an outward shew of Piety and Justice, it being very sure, that false brethren and hypocrites abound every where, from thence our Writers have with a great deal of reason inferred, that they made a Church that was invisible.

Moreover, according to the Lutherans and Calvinists, Righteousness consists in Faith alone, and for the Church to be the Company of Righteous and Good men, is the same thing with them, as for it to be the Company of True Believers? And now, who does not plainly perceive, that, exclude out of the Church all that have not true Faith in their hearts, and our opinion is perfectly the same with theirs. Besides, it is necessary, we should have a certain and infallible

knowledg what Company of Men are Jesus Christ's true Church, because Scripture, Traditions, and indeed all establish'd Doctrines depend upon the Churches Testimony; and supposing us not to be perfectly assured, which is the true Church, every thing will be uncertain. But if inward Faith be necessarily required in every member or part of the Church, we can never attain to a certain and infallible knowledg, which is the true Church; for who can know certainly what particular persons have that true Faith? This Faith therefore is not necessary, nor any thing else that is invisible, and secret, to make a Man any way belong to the Church.

You see now of how mighty a Consequence Bellarmin judges it, and how much for the Church of Romes advantage, that the True Church should not be composed of true Believers only, but Hypocrites and wicked men be allowed for members of it also. Unless you stick close to this position, and maintain it stilly, you agree with the Calvinists in the point of the Churches invisibility; and which is worse, you overthrow her supreme Authority, and make, whatever depends upon her Testimony, which in a word is every thing, to be doubtful and uncertain. What then could be the meaning of M. de Meaux to be silent in a Tenet, without the settling of which, all the Decisions and Doctrines of the Romish Church are in a desperate condition, and all to trouble his Brain about a thing that can do him no good at all?

Having now offered these two things in the first place, I beg his favour to desire that this new explanation of his may be a little illustrated. For these words, *That the Elect are the most Essential part of the Church*, are capable of a double meaning; the one a literal and philosophical, to denote, that it is really of the Essence of the Church, to be in part composed of the Elect; the other, vulgar and more obvious, to signify plainly, that the Elect are the most worthy, most valuable, and most useful part of the Church. It may very well be said, for instance, in that vulgar sence, that Learned men are the most Essential part of the State, without meaning thereby, that Learning is the Essential form of the State, or that Learned men are any necessary part of its Constitution; but the meaning would be, that being parts of the State by their subjection to the Laws, their Learning makes them to be valuable above the rest of the parts. If this be M. de Meaux's meaning, he says no more than he did before, *That the Elect are the noblest and most spiritual part of the Church*; he says nothing that is contrary to Bellarmin's and du Perron's opinion, which I charged him with; nothing but what might as well have been let alone, for he was never taxed, either with denying that the Elect might be parts of the Church, or with representing them as the less valuable, and less useful parts of it. His expression will import

no more than this, that the Elect, who by their outward profession are become parts of the Church, but are the Elect upon some other account, must be lookt upon by virtue of that Election, as the worthiest and most excellent part; so that their Election is not the thing that makes them members of it; but when they are members, it gives them a value above the rest. Now all this is impertinent to the Controversy between us, because it still continues to be taken for granted, that, in strict and proper speaking, the Elect are not Essential to the Church.

Eng. Re-
flect. p.93.

But if M. de Meaux took this word *Essential*, as I am verily perswaded he did, not in that vulgar, but in its proper and philosophical sense, so as to mean by it, that it is really Essential to the Church, to be in part composed of the Elect, I am extremely mistaken, if his explication, instead of bringing him out of his perplexity, do not intangle him in it more and more. Not to urge at present, that it is a very unusual thing to talk of degrees of more or less in defining the Essence of any thing, when men endeavour to deliver themselves properly; He gives us a notion of the Church, as of a whole, whose Essential Composition is of Elect Persons and Reprobates, Good and Bad, only with this difference, that the Elect and the Good are more essential to it, than the Reprobate and Wicked. *We consider the Elect*, says he, *as making the most Essential part and strength of the Church.* The Reprobates then are a less Essential part, but they are an Essential one still. Let us take this, pray, into a little more particular Examination. You have here a Body, not only put together of two contrary pieces, Friends and Enemies of God, Blessed and Cursed, but built up of both these essentially. You have a Body which essentially belongs to two different Heads, Jesus Christ and the Devil; Two very opposite forms, Election and Reprobation; and over and above these two forms, a third, in which the two others meet, and are included, to wit, Exterior Profession. A Body too, which shall have all this in the very design and primary intention of God; for the Essence is always from the Author's first intention, and that of the Church must needs have been regularly formed in the purpose of God. You have here a Church, which, had she no Reprobates in her, would be imperfect, because one part of her Essence would then be wanting; or rather, if you will, which could not be the Church, if the Reprobates were wanting, because a thing cannot be such, unless it have all the Essence required to make it such. A Church that will have, and that essentially, two ends or events, Salvation and Damnation, Paradise and Hell; a Church, which upon its general dissolution at the Day of Judgment, shall be, in its most Essential part the portion of God; and in its less Essential, the Devil. Do not you think all this very whimsical

fical and odd, and very unbecoming a Man of M. de Meaux's knowledge and abilities?

And yet every tittle of it is the evident consequence of his expression understood in the proper and literal sense; for, he that calls one part the most Essential, must suppose another part Essential too, tho less Essential than the former; as, when I say, the Soul is the most Essential part of a Man, I suppose the Body, which is the other part, to be Essential too, tho less Essential of the two: So that here is no body puts any thing upon M. de Meaux, and if he have any occasion to complain, it is only of himself.

Hitherto I have only charged him with making the Essence of the Church to consist in an *Exterior Profession*, which might be common to Good and Bad Men, to the Elect and the Reprobate, and this I thought very strange. But now I must accost him in other Language, and tell him, that by giving the advantage of comparison, a more and a less, he hath made that Essence to consist as much in Ungodliness as Godliness, in Reprobation as much as in Election; all that was said to him before, implied no more, than that he composed a Church of hypocrites and wicked men, as well as of the Regenerate and Elect; now we must say, that he hath composed it essentially both of the one and the other. Before, if his Church might be composed wholly of hypocrites and none else, it might likewise have been composed wholly of good men and none else: Now both sorts are become necessary, the one so, in a greater, the other in a less degree; so that there could not be any Church in the World, unless some Hypocrites were in it. Pray tell me if this be not every whit as frightful an Idea, as that other which he mentioned before?

It may perhaps be objected, that I ought not to urge this Expression *More Essential*, which M. de Meaux hath made use of, so far; nor insist so hard upon it; that it was a word slip't from him before he had well considered it; and that he only intended to say, that the Elect are an Essential part of the Church, without meaning thereby, that the Reprobates are likewise Essential to it. Thus the Answerer to Mr. Milet hath delivered himself; for though this latter spoke a little more cautiously than M. de Meaux, yet it is highly probable, that both of them had the same meaning.

But still alas! all this is a mere shift. So long as the Elect are considered, as making one part of the Church only; and the other part consisting of Reprobates, this will be a very monstrous composition still. We should judge of the Church with respect to the first design of it, for so far we must go to have a true and sufficient knowledge of her: and in

con-

considering it thus, such as hold the Elect to be only parts, though they grant them to be the most Essential ones, are compelled to acknowledge, that the Reprobates which make up the other part, must be also in the first design of the Church; and consequently, that they must be Essential, or at least Integrate parts of it, that is, they will be necessarily required, in order to make the Church perfect and complete. They are driven to acknowledge one of these two things, either, that God designed to make but one part of his Church, to wit, that which consists of his Elect, and left the other for the Devil to finish that; I mean, which consists of the Reprobates, which is a thing too horrid to be imagined, and attended with prodigious consequences: Or else, they must say that both these parts were of God's own designing, and first institution, which is as horrid, and liable to as prodigious consequences as the other. Because if this be once allowed, we can no longer with the Gospel tax the Enemy for sowing the Tares while men slept, but we must own this to be by the Master of the House his own order. We can no longer say, *Every plant*
 Mar. 15. 13 *which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*; but, of those plants which our heavenly Father hath planted, some shall be rooted up, and some shall be suffered to grow still. We can no longer say with St. Paul, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world*: But there must be a mixture of the Curse with the Blessing, Hell with Heaven, and Reprobation with Election. It can no longer be said, *There is one Body and one Spirit*; but we must confess there is a twofold Spirit, though there be but one
 Eph. 1. 3. *Body*. It can no longer be said, *That the body of Christ is edified, till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man*; But we must say, his Body is edified till we all come together, some in the unity of the Faith, and others in the unity of Hypocrisie. We cannot any longer say, that *from Christ, which is the Head, the whole body fitly joyned together and compacted, by that which every joynth supplieth, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of it self in love*; But it must be said, that one part of this body, being not fitly joyned together, nor compacted, does not make or receive any increase from the head, nor grow at all to Edification, but to the Destruction of it self.

Now if you will act agreeably to this Hypothesis, how can you excommunicate any man, though never so scandalous? and may not he in such a case very reasonably reply upon you, What right have you to cut me off from a Body, which according to it's own nature, and first institution, must be composed of dead Members as well as living, of Reprobates as well as Elect? If I be not to be reckoned among these latter, yet how-
 ever

ever I must be among the former sort. What answer could be returned him upon such an occasion? Can you drive him away out of your Church for not being a good man? This can be no sufficient warrant for your proceedings, because you agree, that wicked men do in part compose the Church; even in God's own purpose, and first designation. And if you drive him out for not observing his exterior profession, and appearing no better to the World: Then you punish him for not being a dextrous cleanly Hypocrite, and make the Church a perfect *Lacedæmon*, which punishes Robbers, not because they are Robbers, but because they do not Rob with Cunning and Address. The same objection may be urged, as to your reconciling lapsed Sinners, and entertaining new Converts. Provided they promise you an exterior profession, this is enough; you cannot reject them, because by requiring of them strictly an inward Faith, and true Piety, and firm Charity, and rejecting them, if they do not tie themselves up to all these Conditions; you would go contray to God's design, and the nature of the Church, which do both make it necessary that one of its parts should consist of wicked men and Reprobates. Such are the consequences of this new Explanation.

As for the Comparifon taken from dead and petrified members in the body of a man, and that other of nails and hair, and peccant humours, so constantly made use of by the Polemical Divines of the *Romish* Church, and by M. de Meaux, as well as the rest, thereby to make it more clear in what manner wicked men are of the body of the Church, it does but present us with larger and more particular discoveries, how very ill an opinion that is. If there be dead and rotten members in the Body of the Church, then of necessity, there must either be two essential Forms mighty contrary to one another; the first whereof gives life to some Members, and the second lets the rest continue still dead; or, if there be but one form for all the Members, then by consequence, this does not communicate Life of it self; for if that which gives the Church its formal Existence, and constitutes Members of it, gave Life, there could not any longer be any dead or rotten Members in the Church. The first of these overthrows the Unity of the Church, and of one makes two several Churches. The second must be absurd and unnatural; for, whereas in the ordinary course of Nature, it is the form, and not the matter which conveys Life; here quite contrary, what Life appeared in the Church, would be derived from the Matter, and not the Form of the Church; and tho a man should consider her with respect to her Form only, which yet is constantly the noblest part of every thing, he might very well conceive her perfect and entire, as compos'd of Hypocrites and wicked Men.

M. de Meaux knows well enough, That in strict and proper speaking, the Body of a Man hath no dead nor putrified Members in it. To be really and truly a Member of the Body, there is a necessity of being informed by the common Form. And as for peccant Humours, Nails and Hair, I shall not dispute whether they be part of the Body or not; but content my self with answering in short, that if they be not in any respect alive, and do not partake at all of the common Form, they are not in truth Parts of the Body, but only Excrefcencies from it.

Would not M. de Meaux have taken a better course, think you, if instead of following these unusual Notions of the modern Controvertists, he had kept close, as the Protestants do, to those we meet with in Scripture, which making the eternal Decree of Gods Election, to differ in nothing from his purpose and design of the Church, makes us consider the Church as the Body of such as God by his mercy hath singled out from the rest of Mankind, whom he hath effectually given to Jesus Christ, to be redeemed by his Blood, and in time by means of his Holy Spirit and Word, be infallibly brought unto everlasting Life, without admitting into this Body the Wicked and Reprobates, who cannot be made partakers of this glorious Name, the Church of Jesus Christ, without doing it dishonour. Had he not better have followed St. *Augustin's* Notions, out of whose writting I have already produced so many Testimonies? Observe how he speaks to this purpose in his Comment

* Vestimenta ejus sunt sancti ejus, Electi ejus, tota Ecclesia ejus; quam sibi sicut vestem exhibet, sine macula & ruga. Prop-

ter maculam abluens in sanguine, propter rugam extendens in Cruce, *Augustin in Psalm. 44. Enarrat. Edit. Basil. 1569.*

† Habere autem baptismum, & tradere, & accipere malos nequaquam in melius commutatores demonstravimus. quos non pertinere ad sanctam Ecclesiam Dei, quamvis intus esse videantur, ex hoc apertissime apparet; quia isti sunt avari, raptores, feneratores, invidi, malevoli, & cetera hujusmodi; illa autem columba unica, pudica & casta, sponsa sine macula & ruga, hortus conclusus, fons signatus, paradisus cum fructu pomorum & cetera quæ de illa similiter dicta sunt; quod non intelligitur, nisi in bonis, & sanctis & iustis. *Aug. de Bapt. Contra Donatist. Lib. 6. Cap. 3.*

Or,

Or, wherefore should he not agree with St. Bernard in his Notions? Who speaks thus, || *What is the Spouse, but the Congregation of the Just? What is that, but the Generation of them that seek the Lord, and the Face of the Bridegroom?* For we must not think he regards her only, and not she him, Cant. 2. 16. *For this reason the Scripture mentions both, My beloved is mine, and I am his. He is mine, because Good and Merciful; and I am his, because not Ungrateful. He gives me Grace from Grace, I return him Grace for Grace. He labours for my Deliverance, and I for his Honour. He to work my Salvation, and I to accomplish his Will. He is mine, and not anothers; because I am his only Dove, and I am his and not anothers, because I hearken not to the Voice of Strangers, nor believe those that tell me, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, he is there. This is the Church. Here is nothing of dead and rotten Members in all this.*

|| Quid sponsa nisi congregatio iustorum, Quid ipsa nili generatio quærentium dominum? quærentium faciem Sponsi? Non

enim ille intendit huic, & non ista illi. Propterea utrumque ponit dicens, Ille mihi, & ego illi. Ille mihi, quia benignus & misericors est; Ego illi, quia non sum ingrata. Ille mihi gratiam ex gratia, ego illi gratiam pro gratia. Ille meæ liberationi, ego illius honori. Ille salutis meæ, ego illius voluntati; Ille mihi, & non alteri, quoniam una sum Columba ejus; Ego illi, & non alteri, nec enim audio vocem alienorum; nec enim acquiesco dicentibus mihi, Ecce hic est Christus, aut ecce illic est. Hæc Ecclesia, Bellarm. Serm. 68. super Cantic. Edit. Basil. 1566.

Why should he not conform to *Hugo de S. Victor's* Notions? ∴ *He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, says he, is no Member of Christ. In this Body which is one, there is one Spirit. Within this Body there is nothing dead, out of it nothing alive. We become Members of it by Faith, and we are enlivened by*

∴ Qui non habet Spiritum Christi, non est Mem-

brum Christi. In corpore uno Spiritus unus. Nihil in corpore mortuum, nihil extra corpus vivum. Per fidem Membra efficitur, per dilectionem vivificamur, per fidem accipimus unionem, per Charitatem accipimus vivificationem.— Ecclesia sancta corpus est Christi, uno Spiritu vivificata, & unita fide una, & Sanctificata. Hujus corporis membra singuli quique fidelium existunt, omnes corpus unum, propter Spiritum unum, & fidem unam. Quemadmodum autem in corpore humano, singula quæq; membra propria ac discreta officia habent, & tamen unumquodq; non sibi soli agit, quod solum agit; sic in Corpore sanctæ Ecclesiæ dona gratiarum distributa sunt, & tamen unusquisq; non sibi soli habet etiam id quod solus habet. Soli enim oculi vident, & tamen sibi solummodo non vident, sed toti corpori; solæ autem aures audiunt, --- soli pedes ambulant, & non sibi, sed toti corpori. Et ad huc modum--- secundum dispositionem optimi largitoris, & distributoris sapientissimi, singula sunt omnium, & omnia singulorum.— Hac itaq; similitudine, Ecclesia sancta, id est, Universitas fidelium, Corpus Christi vocatur, propter Spiritum Christi quem accepit, cujus participatio in nomine designatur, quando à Christo Christianus appellatur. Hoc itaq; nomen signat membra Christi participantia Spiritum Christi.— Christus quippe Unctus interpretatur, illo videlicet oleo lætitiæ, quod præ cunctis participibus suis secundum plenitudinem accipit, & cunctis participibus suis quasi caput Membris, secundum participationem transfudit. Sicut unguentum in capite quod descendit a capite in barbam, & deinde usq; in Oram id est, Extremitatem vestimenti, defluxit, ut ad totum efflueret, & totum vivificaret. Quando ergo Christianus efficeris, membrum Christi efficeris, membrum corporis Christi, participans Spiritum Christi; Quid est ergo Ecclesia, nisi multitudo fidelium, Universitas Christianorum? *Hugo de S. Victore Lib. 2. de Sacrament. Par. 2. cap. 1, 2. Edit. Mogunt. 1617.*

Charity.

Charity. Faith unites us, and Charity quickens and animates us. And a little after, The Holy Church is Jesus Christ's Body, quickned by one Spirit, united and sanctified by one Faith. The Members of this Body are every particular Believer, which altogether make one Body, because of the one Spirit of Christ, and one Faith. And, as in the Body of a Man, the Members have each of them their several Offices distinct, and yet what each of them does, it does not for it self alone; so in the Body of the Holy Church, Gifts and Graces are imparted to every one, and yet what each single Person hath alone, he hath not for his own sake alone. The Eyes see, but they see for the whole Body, and not for themselves alone. The Ears only hear, and the Feet only walk, yet is it not for themselves only, but for the whole Body; and in the same manner, by the wise and good disposal of Almighty God, every thing is designed for the benefit of all the Members, and all things for each of them. After the same manner, the Holy Church, that is, the Society of the faithful, is called the Body of Christ, upon the account of Christ's Spirit which it hath received, and the very Name of Christian being derived from Christ, denotes this Participation of the Spirit. This Name marks out the Members of Christ partaking of Christ's Spirit. Christ signifies Anointed with that Oyl of Gladness which he received in full proportion above his Fellows, and which, as the head, he conveys down to the Members, like Aaron's Oyl, that went down from his Head to his Beard, and even to the Skirts of his Clothing; and so this flows through every part, and enlivens every part. When you therefore are made a Christian, you are made a Member of Christ, a Member of Christ's Body, a partaker of Christ's Spirit. What then is the Church, but the Company of Believers, the whole Society of Christians? There is no discerning any dead or rotten Members in it hitherto.

* Non
prævale-
bunt ad-
versus e-
am.—
A vera fi-
de subver-
tendo, ex
quo pater,
quod Ec-

Or, why should we not agree with *Nicolas de Lyra* his Notions? * *The Gates of Hell* (says he) shall not prevail against the Church, that is, so as to make her utterly fall away from the true Faith. Whence it is plain, That the Church does not consist of Men, with regard to their Power or Dignity, Ecclesiastical or Secular, because that many Princes and Popes, and others of a lower Rank have Apostatized plainly from the true Faith. The Church then consists in Persons that have and do retain the true Knowledge and Confession of the Faith, and the Truth.

clesia non consistit in hominibus ratione potestatis, vel dignitatis Ecclesiasticæ vel Sæcularis, quia multi Principes, & summi Pontifices & alii inferiores inventi sunt Apostatasse a fide. Propter quod Ecclesia consistit in illis personis, in quibus est notitia vera, & confessio fidei, & veritatis, Lyra in Matth. 16. vid. Gloss. Ordin. Edit. Antverp. 1634.

Or,

Or, why should we dissent from those of Cardinal Cajetan?

† St. Paul, he says, calls the Church Jesus Christs Body, that is, his Mystical Body, for the Faithful are as it were Members of Jesus Christ. And upon this account the company of the Faithful, meant by the word Church, is the Body of Christ. The Apostle here very appositely subjoyns his Fulness, to represent to us a Body composed of all its Parts. The Church is Jesus Christs Body, because it is his fulness, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, that is, a Body which by being compleat in all its Parts, is answerable to him that filleth all in all. The Church is, as a Body perfect throughout, and proportioned to Jesus Christ its Head, as the Body with its Members and Parts, is proportioned to the living Creature. But Christ fills all and every thing Spiritually, in all his Members and Parts, much more, than the Soul fills all the Parts of the Body animated by it. These words give us a Description of the Church in her entire Perfection, and of the Efficacy and Sufficiency of Jesus Christ for the whole Church, and every one of his Members in particular. And something further, || The Church is not only Christs Body, but a Body formed of Christs own Flesh and Bones upon the Cross. For the Flesh and Bones of Jesus Christ upon the Cross, contributed more to the forming Jesus Christs Mystical Body, the Church, than the Flesh and Bones of Adam ever did to the forming Eve; because the Flesh and Blood of Christ upon the Cross contributed their own Life to form the Body of the Church; and this is what Adam's Flesh and Bones never contributed. And now I beseech you, where are these dead and rotten Members, which M. de Meaux will needs admit into the Composition of the Church?

† Ecclesiam appellat Corpus Christi, proculdubio Mysticum. Sunt enim fideles velut membra Christi; ac per hoc Congregatio fidelium, quam Ecclesia nomen significat, est Corpus Christi — Appositive siquidem dicit Plenitudo ejus, ad explicandum Corpus con-

stans omnibus membris. Ecclesia est Corpus ejus (ut pote plenitudo ejus) qui omnia in omnibus implet, hoc est, plenitudine Universalium partium correspondens illi, qui implet omnia in omnibus. Ecclesia est velut plenum ex omnibus partibus corpus, implens Christum, sicut corpus implet animal membris & partibus. Christus vero implet omnia, & singula in omnibus partibus, & membris spiritualiter, multo magis quam anima implet omnes partes corporis vivificando. Integritas Ecclesiae per hæc describitur, simul cum efficientia & sufficientia Christi, ad universam Ecclesiam, & singula Membra. *Cajetan. in ep. ad Ephes. Edit. Paris 1571.*

¶ Ecclesia non solum est Corpus Christi, sed & corpus formatum de carne Christi, & de ossibus Christi in cruce. Multo enim plus contulerunt caro Christi, & ossa Christi in cruce, ad formandum Corpus Christi Mysticum, quod est Ecclesia, quam contulerunt caro Adæ, & ossa Adæ ad formandam uxorem ejus Evam; quoniam caro Christi, & ossa Christi in cruce contulerunt vitam propriam ad formandum corpus Ecclesiae, Adæ vero caro & ossa non contulerunt propriam vitam. *Cajetan. in 5. Ephes.*

M. de Meaux his Tenth Reflection Examined, concerning the sense of that Article in our Creed: I believe the Catholick Church.

M. *de Meaux* having given us his sense upon that question which concerns the true notion of the Church, in the manner you have already seen, proceeds to a Tenth Reflection; which indeed is not so properly a Reflection, as a kind of Story which he hath thought fit to relate to us. However, such as it is, I will take it into Examination. It consists of a Preamble, that serves to introduce the Story; then comes the Narration it self, and afterwards there follow some Consequences, which *M. de Meaux* pretends to deduce from it.

*Meaux's
Eng. Re-
flect. p. 95.*

In this Preamble he tells us, That, to shew that the word Church signifies in the Apostles Creed a visible Church, I laid for a foundation, that in a Confession of Faith, such as this Creed was, words were used in their most natural and most simple signification: And I added, that the word Church signified so naturally the visible Church, that the Pretended Reformed, Authors of the Chimera of an invisible Church, in all their Confessions of Faith, never used the word Church in this sense, but only to express the visible Church, cloath'd with the Sacraments, with the Word, and withal the publick Ministry. See the passages of the Confession of Faith I have related, with the Consequences I have drawn from them.

Now since *M. de Meaux* was desirous to represent to us, what he designed to do in his Instruction, it was not just however for the giving an advantage to this one word, *To shew*, which carries off a Man's mind to other Ideas, that he should conceal from us several truths, very important, and highly necessary to be known in the case. He conceals from us his having charged the Protestants with misunderstanding that Article of the Creed, *I believe the Catholick*, or, *Universal Church*, and the invidious comparisons he made upon that occasion, betwixt Them, and the *Arrians*, the *Macedonians*, and *Socinians*. He conceals from us, that this accusation was followed by a full and perfect justification of the Protestants in this particular, and the matter so handled, that he was reduced to a necessity of either withdrawing his accusation, or engaging against that defence of theirs. He says not a word of our having made it appear to him, both by the testimony of *St. Augustin*, and the Council of *Trent's* Catechism, that the true meaning of these words, *The Catholick Church*, is, the whole body of true believers, who have been, are, and at any time shall be, from the beginning to the end of the

the World. He omits our having shewed him this true meaning proved by the very nature of the thing it self, and the express words of the Creed. He never tells the World of our making it out to him, that the Scriptures constantly use the word in this sense, whensoever they mention it, with regard to its notion of *Universality*, as the Creed does. He says nothing of our maintaining against him, that these words the *Universal Church*, are not capable of any other, either more proper, or more natural signification, than That. And lastly, he conceals the observation we made, of a very considerable defect in his manner of arguing, in that he goes about to prove this pretended meaning of that expression, *the Universal Church*, by that which is frequently given to that term, *the Church*, when found single, tho there be no manner of Consequence from the one of these to the other. All this M. de Meaux very industriously and cunningly slurs over, and speaks not a word of, as if he were not one jot concerned in it. And yet methinks it is plain enough to be discerned, that, if he would have dealt sincerely and fairly, he ought to have taken some notice of it, and to have added in his own behalf, that either he replied to, or acquiesced in these things.

But let us look into that which M. de Meaux says, he designed to shew, in the instruction given to *Mademoiselle de Duras*; *It was* (says he) *that the word Church signifies in the Creed, a visible Church*. Wherefore should a Man of his Character take such pains to be obscure? If the establishing this assertion, that the word Church in the Creed includes a visible Church, be all he aimed at, he would have been at a great deal of trouble, that might as well have been spared, and the repetition of his Argument over again in this place, would be still more superfluous, after having seen what I represented to him; that the *Universal Church* in our Creed, must be extended to the Church now in Heaven, and that which shall be in the future Ages, and that which is at present upon Earth. The last of these, tho invisible in some respects, does yet continue to be visible in some others; so that it would have been needless and unprofitable to insist upon the proof of a thing wherein we were both agreed before.

But in truth, his design was to advance two things: The one, That the word *Catholic* or *Universal Church* in the Creed, signifies a visible Church only, and not one that is invisible in any respect. This is the thing his proof, and the whole managery of it drives at, and upon this account, he calls the Invisible Church, a Chimæra. *The Pretended Reformed* (saith he) *are the Authors of the Chimæra of an Invisible Church*. The second thing he would establish, is, that by this visible Church, to which he thinks the sense of that Article in our Creed must be confined,

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p. 6.

must be understood, not the Church of True believers only, how visible soever that may be, but a Church composed of good and bad, elect and reprobate promiscuously. For this is the *Helena* so vehemently contended for by the modern disputants, as being abundantly sensible, how absolutely necessary it is to the support of their blind obedience. Upon this account, M. de Meaux in his Instruction, hath put a formal distinction between his visible Church, and the company of the predestinate, as the whole is distinguished from one of its parts. *The Society of the Predestinate*, he says, *are not excluded from it, God forbid, they are the most noble part of it, but they are comprised in the whole.* When he tells us here, his design was to shew, that the word Church in the Creed signifies a visible Church, it must be understood, that his design was to shew, that the Universal Church, which we profess to believe in the Creed, signifies nothing else but a visible and exterior Church, that, I mean, which is composed of good and bad, of true believers and hypocrites indifferently.

This was the very thing M. de Meaux pretended to, and what in truth he designed to shew, upon which account I have offered two things against him; the one, that the word Church in our Creed must be allowed to extend a great deal farther than the visible Church; and besides the Church at present upon Earth, it must also take in that which is in Heaven, and that also which, as yet, is not in being; which two are parts very far from being visible. The other thing I offered in reply was, that the true visible Church upon Earth, is not all that exterior Society that gathers together good and bad men promiscuously, but that it consists solely in the Society of True Believers, and righteous persons.

Eng. Re-
flect. p. 95.

This remark is necessary to be made, that so the true state of the Question between us may be apprehended clearly, without any ambiguity or equivocation; and it is likewise so, because from hence we may be able to judge of the strength or weakness of M. de Meaux his Argument, as he himself represents it to us. *I laid*, says he, *for a foundation, that in a Confession of Faith, such as the Creed is, words were used in their most natural and simple signification; and I added, that the word Church signified so naturally the visible Church, that the Pretended Reformed Authors of the Chimera of an invisible Church, in all their Confessions of Faith, never used the word Church in this sense; but only to express the visible Church, clothed with the Sacraments, with the Word, and with all the publick Ministry.*

M. de Meaux his Argument may be reduced to this form: The word Church in the Creed must be taken in the same signification that it is naturally taken in, by the Pretended Reformed in their Confession of Faith;

Faith; But in the Pretended Reformed's Confession of Faith it is naturally taken for a visible Church; therefore it must be taken for a visible Church in the Creed.

This Argument hath two faults: The first is, what I took notice of before, That to shew *the Universal Church* signifies a visible Church, he goes about to prove it, by saying, the single word *Church* in our Confession of Faith, signifies naturally a visible Church only. 'Tis just as if I should say, that these words, *the Whole Earth*, do naturally signify no more than my Field, or my Vineyard, or the ground I dwell upon, because I naturally give my Field, or my Vineyard, or the ground I dwell upon, the name of *Earth* taken singly, and express in one word. Now, as it would be most absurd to argue at that rate, because it might presently be objected, that these words, *the whole Earth*, naturally signifies the whole Globe of the Earth; whereas that of *Earth* single, may be applied to any particular parcel of that Globe, so that there could be no manner of consequence deduced from the one to the other; just as absurd is M. de Meaux his way of reasoning in our Case. The words *Universal Church* signify one thing, and the word *Church* taken single, another; *The Universal Church* naturally denotes the whole mystical body of Christ, *The Church* alone is a word that may very naturally be spoken of any part of this Mystical Body. So that to argue from the one to the other, is a mere Sophistry; for it puts more in the Conclusion, than was contained in the Premises.

But this is not all, That Argument is still chargeable with another defect, full as intolerable as the former. This consists in that equivocating term *the Visible Church*; for it is not true, that the word *Church* is meant in our Confession of Faith, of a visible Church, in the same sense that M. de Meaux would have us interpret it in the Creed. He would have the meaning of it in the Creed to be, a visible Church composed of good and bad men together; and in our Confession of Faith, we mean by it a visible Church composed of the true Believers only; so that here are two sorts of visibility, very different from one another.

If you would therefore know the true state of M. de Meaux's Argument, it may be thus discovered; The words *Universal Church* must be taken in the Creed, in the same sense that you naturally take the single word *Church* in your Confession of Faith.

But in your Confession of Faith you take the single word *Church* for a visible Church, by such a visibility, as the Society of True Believers only are visible by.

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Therefore the words, *Universal Church*, must be taken in the Creed, for a Church visible in such a manner, as a mixt Society of good and bad men are visible.

The first of these Propositions is evidently contrary to common sense; the second is a granted truth; but the Conclusion is absurd. And in general, the whole Syllogism consists of five terms; (1.) The term *Universal Church* in the Creed. (2.) The word *Church* taken single in the Confession of Faith. (3.) The Visibility of a Society of True Believers. (4.) The Visibility of a Society of good and bad men together. (5.) The *Conformity* between the Creed, and that Confession of Faith. This sure a Man may be allowed with some degree of Confidence to call an ill Argument.

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Eng. Refl.
p. 96.

Pag. 97.

After this Preamble, M. de Meaux tells us a Story of a National Synod of Gap, and another of Rochell, with which he intermixes a blind account of some certain Printers, who used to reprint the Confession of Faith with this Title forbidden in the Synod; *The Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches, reviewed and corrected in the National Synod.* He tells us then, that it was decreed in the Synod of Gap, *That the Provincial Synods should examine what was to be amended in the Twenty fifth Article of the Confession, forasmuch as being to express what we believe, touching the Catholick Church, of which mention is made in the Creed, there is nothing in the said Confession, that can be taken, but for the Militant, and Visible Church.* He adds, *That in the National Synod of Rochel, it was resolved, not to add, or diminish any thing in the terms of the Confession of Faith. So that (says he) by the decision of this Synod, the Visible Church alone appears in the Pretended Reformed's Confession of Faith; the Invisible Church hath no part in it, and one draws from it Consequences as one can.*

We shall see presently, whether the Inferences M. de Meaux deduces from this Story, be of such weight and consideration as he imagines. At present I need only say, that there is nothing appears in the proceedings of these Synods, but what is very usual with all Assemblies. The Synod of Gap had desired, that the Confession of Faith might make more particular and express mention of the whole Body of the Universal Church spoken of in the Creed; and, whereas it took notice of the militant and visible part only, that it might also express the invisible parts of it, which are the triumphant Church already in Heaven, and that which is yet to come. This motion of theirs seemed to be well grounded enough. The Synod of Rochel did not think it at all necessary, to add any thing to the former terms of the Confession; and they had their Reasons too. Indeed, considering that the Confession of Faith does in its fifth Article formally receive the Apostles Creed, in which

which men confess the Universal Church, and no body had ever yet denied, that the Church of the Saints in bliss, nor that of the faithful which shall spring up in succeeding Ages, are parts of that Church; and much less still was it ever denied, that these two parts are not visible to our eyes; this was esteemed sufficient for a short confession, in which every thing could not possibly be explained at large. All that the Synod of *Rochel* can be charged with, must be, that not being composed of prudent, honest men, they did not foresee that this Confession's not mentioning the Church to come hereafter in express terms, would one day be objected in dispute against us. Had they had the least foresight or suspicion of this, possibly they might have spoiled M. de Meaux his Story; but it is as possible too, that they would never have troubled themselves about it, nor thought such wretched little scruples worth their consideration.

For my own part, whatever I think of this Prelate's person, I must confess, I look upon his Narration, and the Consequences he pretends to draw from it, as a very trifling piece of business; and all I can gather from it, is only that M. de Meaux is liable to be imposed upon, as well as the rest of the World. This will very manifestly appear, if we observe, that three sorts of *Invisibility* are attributed by us to the Church. The first is that which conceals from us the two greatest parts of this whole, called the *Universal Church*, to wit, that part now in Heaven, and that which is not yet in being. The second is that which hinders us from discerning the interior form of the Church at present upon Earth, I mean, true Regeneration, and true Piety, which are not visible of themselves, but only by their marks and characters, and these are frequently very deceitful, with respect to particular persons. The third is that which sometimes darkens those very marks and characters of the Church, to such a degree, that a Man can scarcely know them. The first may be called an *Invisibility* of the parts, the second an *Invisibility* of the Form or Essence, and the third an *Invisibility* of the Marks or Characters.

It is plain, that of these three sorts, only the second and third can be the subject of a dispute between us and the Church of *Rome*. For the first, no man ever did, or could deny. Interpret the term *Catholic Church* in the Creed, which way you will, still it must be granted, that these three parts make up but one Body: And it is as certain, that of these three parts, two of them must be Invisible. M. de Meaux must have excellent Eyes if he could see the Company of Saints in Paradise; and be very sharp-sighted, to discern that Company of the Faithful which shall be hereafter in succeeding Generations. This *Invisibility*

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then he cannot contend with me about. And yet this is the only visibility treated of in the Synods of *Gap* and *Rochel*; this is the only one not expressly mentioned in the Confession of Faith, that which the Synod of *Gap* desired might be particularly inserted, but the Synod of *Rochel* judged needless to have inserted. And upon this alone it is, that M. de Meaux keeps such a bustle, and argues so violently. *The Pretended Reformed*, he says, *are the Authors of the Chimera of an Invisible Church, and yet this is not in their Confession of Faith, as appears by the Synods of Gap and Rochel; and if it be not in their Confession of Faith, they must own it is not in Scripture, otherwise their Confession is not conformable to Scripture, which they pretend it is. Now if the Invisible Church be not in the Scripture, then neither is it in the Creed. Mr. Claude and the Protestants will not deny it. The Church then is taken, both in the Scripture and in the Creed for a Visible Church.*

What a world of noise is here about little or nothing! If M. de Meaux could have discovered, that the two other sorts of Invisibility, which are in controversy between the Protestants, and those of the *Roman* Communion, are not to be found in the Confession of Faith, he might make some advantage of that, and deduce what consequences he thought fit from it. But to argue at random about our Confessions, making no express mention of an Invisibility own'd and acknowledged on both sides, what benefit can this be to him? Does not he himself confess this Invisibility? Does not he think, that these two parts of the Church, the one in Heaven, the other yet future, are not visible by us? If so, Why does he call it a Chimera of the Protestants? Let Infidels and Pagans call it a Chimera of the Christians, in God's name let them do it, 'tis their unbelief that makes them say so of it. But how shall we excuse M. de Meaux, who acknowledges and believes it, when he calls it a Chimera? And does he do his Religion any great service or credit in making Protestants to be the Authors of it? But, says he, *it is not in your Confession of Faith.* What great matter whether it be or no, since it is a point, in which, by the Grace of God, both Communions are agreed? But if it be not in your Confession, it is not in the Scriptures neither. Both sides of us would be very unhappy, if it were not in Scripture; and since all of us believe it is, to what purpose should he give himself all this trouble to take it away from thence? Tho it were not in the Confession of Faith, it might be in the Scripture, I hope, for all that; since neither their, nor our Confessions, can possibly contain all that is contain'd in Scripture. But, says he further, *if it be not in Scripture, then neither will it be in the Creed.* If M. de Meaux cannot find it in the Creed, let him give me leave to refer him once more to St. *Augustin*, who discovered

covered it there, and to the Council of Trent's Catechism, which found it there as well as St. *Augustin*; and to tell him withal, that it is an affected singularity in him, to refuse acknowledging it to be there. M. de Meaux will say, *It makes for him, that the word Church should be taken alike both in the Scripture and the Creed, for a visible Church.* But how does this make for him? Is it because the Invisibilty now discours'd of, is not consistent with the visibilty, in respect of several parts? Are not the same Earth, the same Stars, the same Sun, Moon, and Heavens visible, and invisible to us at the same time, according to the different position of their several parts? To what purpose then should he be so stiff for taking the Churches Invisibilty out of the Creed, upon pretence of establishing her Visibilty, when both the one and the other may be there together, considered in different respects? Was there any need of fetching engines from *Gap* and *Rochel* for this, and displaying all this fine Contexture of Arguments, which would end at last in nothing else, but the subversion of what we believe? in taking away out of the Scripture and Creed, a thing that is evidently contained in both; and to take it away too, when there was no necessity for it, no advantage to be got by it, and contrary to the express testimony of what is most authentick in his own Communion? If all this be not a blind side in him, I do not know what can deserve that name.

What will become then of M. de Meaux's Consequences and his Arguments? As for that which he calls his *Pinching Consequence*, I am in good hopes, how pinching soever it may be, to make it more gentle and easy; and for that Argument *that will overturn the whole pretended Reformation*, this, if I am not mightily mistaken, will be easily blown off. The pinching Consequence is, *That if the Church appears, only as visible, in the Reformed's Confession of Faith; and if, besides, they assert this Confession of Faith, as conformable in all points to the Scripture, they must tell us, that this manner of explicating the Church, comes from the Scripture, and that from Scripture it has past naturally into the ordinary Language of Christians, into the Confessions of Faith, and consequently into the Creed, which is not only the best authorised of all Confessions, but also the most simple.* Eng. Refl. page 98. Pag. 97, 98.

I answer, it is true, that this acceptation of the word *Church*, for a Visible Church, as our Confession takes it, does come from Scripture, and that from the Scripture it hath naturally past into the ordinary Language of Christians, and into their Confessions of Faith, when the word is met with in this sense. But then I say withal, that the acceptation of the same word for an Invisible Church, with respect to some of its parts, does as well every whit, and in the very same manner, come from the same Scripture, and, that from the same Scripture

Eng Refl.
pag. 98.

it hath naturally past into the ordinary Language of Christians, and into their Confessions of Faith, when the word occurs in this last sense. These two Propositions are both as true as one another; and if you would be satisfied how it comes to pass they are so, it is, because it is as natural for the Scripture to take the word in this last sense, as to take it in the first; as natural to understand an Invisible Church by it, as a Visible, according as the matter in hand, and the connexion of the discourse require. Since then the term *Universal* or *Catholick* is subjoyned to that of Church in our Creed, it is evident our Creed hath followed one of those natural senses in Scripture, where by the word Church it understands the whole mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the greater part whereof is Invisible to us. And for our Confession of Faith, which lookt upon the Church under another respect, That hath followed the other natural sense in Scripture, which by this word intends to signify a Visible Church. Thus both the Creed, and the Confession of Faith agree with Scripture exactly, tho they use this word in different Sences. And now see what becomes of M. de Meaux his pinching Consequence? As for his *overturning* Argument, he gives it us in form thus. *The word Church ought to be taken in the pretended Reformed's Confession of Faith, as it is naturally taken in Scripture; otherwise in a fundamental Article of the Christian Religion, this Confession of Faith would not be conformable, as it pretends, to the Holy Scripture. Now in this Confession of Faith, the word Church is taken for a visible Society; this Proposition is acknowledged in the Synod of Gap, as we saw just now. 'Tis thus then, that the word Church is naturally taken in Holy Scripture. But it is taken in the Creed in the same Sense that it is taken in Scripture. This Mr. Claude and the Protestants will not deny; therefore it is taken alike both in the Scripture and in the Creed, for a visible Church.*

This *overturning* Argument is nothing else, but the *pinching Consequence* disguised, and drest up in form of a Syllogism; since therefore M. de Meaux hath thought fit to reduce it into form, I hope he will please to give me leave to put my Answer into form too. I say then, that of the first of the two Arguments just now propos'd, is in the third Figure. Now, this he cannot but know, is an avowed Principle, that all Conclusions in the third Figure can be only particular; and for a man to go about forming an *Universal Conclusion*, whether he attempt it by expressing the term of *Universality*, or understanding it, is a mere Sophism, and good for nothing but to surprize and confound the Unlearned. All the Conclusion then, that M. de Meaux can draw, is, that *sometimes* the word *Church* is naturally taken in Scripture for a visible Church, which is a thing we never dispute with him about. This is all that.

that can be deduced from that Conformity which ought to be between the Confession of Faith, and the Scripture; for to vindicate this Conformity, it is not necessary, as is plain to every Body, that the Scripture should *always* take the word *Church* in the same Sense that the Confession of Faith takes it; it is enough that the Scripture take it so *sometimes*. If M. de Meaux will push it on further, and infer that the word *Church* must be always taken in Scripture, as it is in the Confession of Faith, he trifles with Us, and abuses his own Reason. He must therefore correct his Conclusion, and say in this Sense the word *Church* is sometimes naturally taken in Scripture. And here we must distinguish between a determinate *sometimes*, so as to say, *That time particularly*; and an indeterminate *sometimes*, so as to say, *At that particular time, or at some other*. In the first Sense we will deny his Principle, because evidently false; In the second, we will grant him that, but deny his Conclusion, because it is evidently inconsequential.

Such as do not understand this Jargon of the Schools, will possibly have a clearer Apprehension of the thing, by the following Description.

The word *Church* must be taken in the Confession of Faith, as it is naturally taken in Scripture. *I grant it.*

Now in this Confession of Faith, the word *Church* is taken for a visible Society. *I grant that too.*

Therefore the word *Church* is naturally taken in this Sense, in Scripture. *This is a false Conclusion, unless sometimes be added, and it run thus,*

Therefore the word *Church* is sometimes naturally taken in this Sense, in Scripture. *Otherwise, the Argument is without form, and none at all.*

But it is taken in the Creed, in the same Sense it is taken in Scripture. *This Antecedent being deduced from the Conclusion of the foregoing Argument, must be amended thus.*

But it is taken in the Creed in the same Sense that it is sometimes taken in, in Scripture. *Here I distinguish between a determinate sometimes, so as to say, That time particularly; and an indeterminate sometimes, so as to say, This particular time, or some other time. In the first Sense, I deny the Antecedent; in the second, I allow it.*

It is therefore taken alike both in the Scripture, and in the Creed, for a visible Church. *I deny this Consequence, because it is plain it does not follow from the Premisses.*

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This now is what M. de Meaux calls his *overturning* Argument, but what any other Man would call, A raw shallow Sophism. How could this Prelate be so blind as not to see, that the word *Church* may be taken in Scripture, sometimes for the whole Body, and sometimes for one of its Parts; sometimes to signify the Church in one Respect and Capacity, and sometimes in another, according as the present Matter of the Discourse requires, and that all these different Acceptations of the word are very natural? How came he not to discern, that by this means our Confession of Faith, and the Creed, may both of them agree with Scripture, and yet not both agree with one another; because the Creed may take the word *Church* conformably to Scripture in one Signification, and the Confession in conformity to the same Scripture may take it in another? Who does not know, that the word *Heaven* is naturally taken in Scripture, sometimes for that part of the Heavens that is visible to us, and sometimes for that whole vast Expansion, that includes both Hemispheres? So that two several men, one of whom may take Heaven in the first Sense, and the other in the second, shall differ mightily from one another, and yet both of them agree with Scripture exactly? Is it fit now, that such a man as M. de Meaux should insist upon such wretched Trifles as these, and pretend out of them to form his *pinching* Consequences, and his *overturning* Arguments?

The Eleventh Reflection Examined, upon Mr. Claude's own acknowledging the Churches perpetual Visibility.

IT may be said with a great deal of Truth, That the Controversy between the Gentlemen of the *Romish* Communion and us, concerning the Church, is, of their side, a mere continued piece of Shifts, and pitiful Evasions, as will be evident to any one that shall consider this Controversy in the several parts and degrees of it. To begin with its first rise, all the World knows, that the Point in debate at first, was only, whether what our Fathers called Errors and Superstitions, were such Errors and Superstitions, as necessarily required a Reformation; and no Body can deny, that the ready and properest way of being satisfied herein, was to examine the things themselves, and compare them with the Scriptures. Nevertheless, these Gentlemen not apprehending themselves very secure, if this method were taken, would needs discover another, and to have this done the more effectually, wisely agreed to maintain, that this Decision ought to depend upon their own Judgment, and that all

all must be submitted to their Discretion and Authority. By this means they engaged us in an enquiry, whether the Pope of *Rome* and his Clergy really are, or ought to be the Supreme Judges in their own Cause; or to say more truly, whether they be the absolute Umpires of Christian Religion, and Masters over the Consciences of all Men whatsoever? This was evidently one Evasion already, for 'tis declining the main Point in dispute. But seeing it's impossible for these Pretentions of the Pope and his Clergy to take place, if men were allowed without more ado, to consult sound Reason and Scripture in the case; these Gentlemen, who never are desirous to bring things to a short issue, have invented another expedient, to entangle us in intricate Questions concerning the Church, where a great many indirect Circumstances might easily be started, and the Simplicity of men imposed upon by Equivocal terms. So that now we are entred upon this Controversy about the Church, where the first thing to be done, is to know what the true Church of Christ is, and form to our selves so exact an Idea of it, as may not lead us into mistakes. I confess, if men would but stick to what might be learnt from Scripture, and sound Reason in the matter, there might be ways found for an Agreement very easily; but instead of doing so, these Gentlemen here make another double. They cry out, that we must not make an Invisible Church of it, and that to compose it all of good Men, and true Believers, would be to make it Invisible; so that now they bring us into a contest about the Churches Invisibilty. And in truth, if they would but stop here, and hold to it; we should know what we have to trust to, and presently discuss this Question with them fairly, Whether a man may not truly say in some sense, that the Church is invisible? But while we are big with this Expectation, and hope for a Conclusion here, they put the change upon us a fourth time; for instead of going about to shew, that the Church is not invisible, they presently undertake to prove that she is visible; as if it were impossible for the same thing to be visible, and invisible in divers Respects. In one word, these Gentlemen manifestly play with us, they make us skip from one branch of the question to another; they carry us about from one place to another, just as they have a mind, with abundance of Wit and Cunning, 'tis true, but very little of that Sincerity and upright Temper, that enquires after Truth, and would be glad to find it.

This is very near the method which *M. de Meaux* hath been forced to follow in this dispute; for indeed there is a necessity, that the form should be adapted to the Capacity of the matter. Of this we have seen several very palpable Instances in the foregoing Reflections; but this Eleventh,

venth, which we are now taking into Examination, gives us one at the first view, which well deserves our Observation. The thing is this, M. de Meaux having in his Instruction to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, undertaken to prove the Churches Visibilty at the same rate that other Disputants of that Church use to do, by the Acceptation of the word, among *Pagans*, among *Jews*, and even in our own Discipline, and Confession of Faith, and by some passages of Scripture; I thought it necessary, in order to exposing the Vanity of these Arguments, to give a clear Explanation of the Protestants Opinion, as to the Visibilty and Invisibilty of that part of the Church at present upon Earth. This was the design of my third enquiry, as you have already seen, wherein I advanced these two Truths. The one, that M. de Meaux was mistaken in supposing, we denied the Church at present upon Earth to be Visible, and consequently, that it was but lost time for him to prove a thing, that was never brought into question by us. The other, that he was as much mistaken, in fancying there could be no visible Church, unless it were composed of good and bad Men, of elect and reprobate Persons promiscuously. Nothing could possibly be imagined more direct and pertinent to the Point, than this, because it was perfectly to evacuate at one stroke, all the pretended Arguments in his Instruction, and at the same time to lay plainly before him the very pinch of the question, to which he ought to have applied himself; it was to shew, that he had taken a great deal of pains, where there was no need of pains; and that he had spared himself, where in truth he ought not to have done it. What now could be expected from M. de Meaux upon this occasion? One would think he were obliged, either frankly to acknowledg his mistake, and that he had taken a wrong way for the instructing his Proselyte; or else to defend his Arguments, and oppose the two things objected against them. In all probability, there was but one of these two things to be done, he must either confess, It is true, I did not sufficiently consider the matter, when I set about the proof of a thing never disputed by either of us, and supposed another, as taking it for a granted and acknowledged Truth, tho it were always controverted; or, if he would not be brought to this Confession, he ought at least to have prosecuted the dispute, and in doing so, to have shewn on one hand, that the Protestants do not really acknowledg the Churches Visibilty; and on the other, that they are agreed upon this Principle, that there is no other Visible Church, but what consists of good and bad Men both; for these were the two things I offered against him. But instead of this, M. de Meaux, who thought it best to perplex the Matter as little as he could, has found out a third way, which is to make what I

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said in my own Vindication, look like a Confession which I had made to him of some very weighty Points, and as some mighty advantage which happened to him before he was aware, and a great many other pleasant Characters which may be put upon it. This is the Business of his Eleventh Reflection.

I confess, this is an ingenious turn; for by it, all occasions cease of mentioning the twofold Surprise put upon *Mademoiselle de Duras*; the one in making her believe that the Protestants deny what they do not; and the other, in proving what he needed not to prove, and in supposing what he ought not to suppose. All this seems perfectly concealed by the expedient. But how ingenious soever it may be, still I must say, That what he would have appear to be a Confession of mine, is in truth no more, than a very natural and faithful Declaration that I have made of the common Opinion of Protestants, which he pretended not to know. 'Tis to no purpose, that he would insinuate, *Mr. Claude speaks of the Church after a manner new in the pretended Reformation.* I have told him nothing, but what all of us believe, and all of us teach; and if he question whether we do or no, he need only read such of our Authors, as have made it their business to treat particularly on this Subject, such as *Calvin, Zuinglius, Musculus, Melancthon, Whitaker, Daneus, Cameron, Du Plessis, Altodius, Rivet, Melitrezat*, and the rest; he need only read such of his own Authors, as have related the Protestants Opinions, as *Bellarmin, Stapleton, Du Perron*; and Cardinal *Richelieu* himself; for, tho these for the most part relate their Adversaries Opinions very immethodically and unsincerely; yet, still they say enough to justify what I have advanced in the Point.

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p. 99.

Indeed all true Protestants believe as I do, that the true Church, that I mean, which is so, not only in Men's but in God's Eyes, consists of true Believers, and that the Wicked, the Unrighteous and Reprobates, have no part in this blessed Communion, which is the Communion of Saints only. All true Protestants believe as I do, that almost infinite numbers of these worldly Men, who do not properly belong to the true Church, do yet still conceal themselves under the veil of Hypocrisy, and herd among the true Believers, and so dissembling what their Condition really is, appear with others in the same publick Assemblies, receive the same Sacraments with them, and are called as they are, without any distinction, to Ministerial Offices; so that the good Corn continues still mingled with the Chaff, and the Tares with the Wheat. All true Protestants own as I do, that for the discovering this true Church thus mingled with wicked Men, and the distinguishing her from other Societies, that put in their claims to this Title; there

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are certain Characters and Signs, that do put a difference between her and them, and make it very feasible for those that seek sincerely, and heartily desire to find her, to know her from those others. All true Protestants acknowledg with me, that two several Judgments and Notions may be past upon this Exterior Society, which contains good and bad Men promiscuously; The one a Judgment of *Charity*, which descends not to any particular Distinctions, but takes it for granted, that every thing is what it appears to be; The other a Judgment of *Reflection*, that distinguishes two sorts of Men in that Society, true and counterfeit Believers; and that these two different Notions, give occasion for Mens expressing themselves two different ways, sometimes attributing the name of Church to this whole Body without any Distinction; and at other times restraining it to the true Believers only, in this mixture of Hypocrites. All true Protestants will say as I do, That not only this whole Body, to which the confused Ideas of Charity allow the name of Church, is visible in its Assemblies, when it is in a condition to hold and celebrate them; but likewise, that the Body of true Believers, to which the Judgment of Reflection confines the name of Church, is so, by the same Assemblies, and the exercise of the Ministry; visible *indistinctly* indeed, but yet so far visible, that a man may with certainty affirm, there are true Believers among those Professors, and consequently, the true Church of Jesus Christ among them. All true Protestants in acknowledging the same Church to be thus Visible, do also at the same time acknowledg with me, that it is in the Eyes of Men invisible, if we speak of a *certain* and *distinct* Visibility, which should extend to the distinguishing particular persons, and enable us to affirm with certainty, that such and such Men are true Believers. For, besides that true Faith is a thing within the Man, and consequently cannot be the proper and immediate Object of our bodily Sight; it hath scarcely any distinguishing Characters, but what Hypocrisy may counterfeit, and consequently may become equivocal and deceitful Signs to us.

You see now how far Protestants go, when they speak of the Church in its natural and ordinary condition. This is what they all say, and acknowledg in the case; But they do not stop here neither. For, as they know that the Body of a Man falls sometimes into great weaknesses and distempers, that break the regular course of nature, and mightily disturb the order of its functions; so are they sensible too, that the Church is liable to some accidents, that may disorder her natural state, and sometimes reduce her to great extremities. Now these accidents, which may very fitly be termed the distempers of the Church, proceed chiefly

chiefly from two Causes ; sometimes from the open impetuosity and violence of the declared enemies of the Gospel, who raise such strong persecutions against her, that she is quite deprived of all liberty to hold any publick Assemblies, or openly exercise her Ministry. At such a time it must be confest, that she is as it were under an Eclipse ; for in the same proportion that she loses this liberty of Assembling her Members, and exercising her Ministry publickly, so much of her visibility she loses with it. Not that she is left utterly destitute of all witness in these perillous and troublesome times, because her very Martyrs and Confessors give abundant testimony to her. But the attempts that are made for her destruction, the calumnies they load her with, and the scattering her Members up and down the World, do darken her in such a manner, that she cannot without much difficulty be discerned. However, thus much at least is plain, that she loses the visibility of her Assemblies, and of the Exercise of her Ministry.

The other Cause, from whence these distempers happen to the Church, are those very worldlings and hypocrites that are intermixed in the same outward profession with true believers. It sometimes falls out, that these men grow to such a prodigious multitude, that the face of the Church is quite disfigured with them, and at such times all things run to disorder and confusion, not only in respect of good morals, but of Doctrines, Worship, and other Rites and Customs. Errors, Superstitions, and False-worship, spread themselves all over, and the Ministry it self, being then got into wicked and unworthy hands, runs counter to what it was naturally designed for, and becomes the very receptacle and fountain of corruption.

When things are brought to this pass, the Church is not extinct, God forbid, the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against her. But she is in part hid under the thick cloud of Superstitions, and hypocritical Christians, that cover and surround her, as a little good Corn is almost quite hidden, when lying in the same floor with a heap of Chaff and refuse ; I say, *in part*, because as in times of the most violent persecutions, the Church hath still her Martyrs, that make her known ; so hath she, when oppress'd and overpowred with counterfeit Christians, her *strong and renowned ones*, such as *St. Augustin* calls *the Stars of the Firmament*, which make her light shine forth, while *the Sand of the Sea shore*, that is, according to his interpretation, the weak and fearful remain covered with the tempestuous waves. This is what the Protestants call a time of the Churches Invisibility, not that they think she was ever so totally eclipsed, as absolutely lose the visibility of her Characters ; but because in those melancholly and afflicted times, her Characters are

so obscured, that they can scarcely be known, whereas at other times they are very easily discerned. Neither do the Protestants think, that, how grossly soever the body of the Ministry may have been corrupted, the lawful use of it was ever utterly, and in all respects, abolished: They are very well satisfied, that if this should fall out at any one time, the Church could not be kept up any longer; but they do acknowledg that this did never actually come to pass in the Christian World.

In a corrupted Ministry they put a difference betwixt the good part of it, and the bad part; betwixt the light and the darkness; and they are of opinion, that God, by his wise Providence hath continually tempered the mixture of good and evil in such a manner, that all the while the Ministry continued in the hands of false Labourers, there was ever reserved such a proportion of good, as was sufficient for the Salvation of his Children; and that, when those false Labourers had brought things to such a pass, that it was no longer possible for men to be safe under their conduct; God called other persons to the Ministry, to exercise and discharge it to edification. Thus, if we speak with reference to the Ministry it self, the Church did never entirely and absolutely cease to be visible in this respect. Those who are desirous to see this subject treated of more at large, may please to peruse what I have written upon that occasion, in my *Defence of the Reformation*, Part 1. Ch. 6. and Part 3d. ch. 5. and Part 4. ch. 1, 2. These are the Propositions which we have granted, and do still grant M. de Meaux; we shall see presently what advantage he pretends to make of them. In the mean time he must give me leave here to present him with some observations of my own.

First then, I shall make bold to tell him, that whenever he shall think to enter into this Controversy against us hereafter, he ought to suppose, that we do acknowledg the Church to have a certain sort of visibility; because indeed we do acknowledg so much, and Bellarmin himself hath owned that we do. * *The Lutherans and Calvinists*, says he, *do fix open some certain exterior and visible marks of the Church, such as the Preaching of God's word, and Administration of the Sacraments; and it is their constant Doctrine, That wheresoever these marks are found, there is the true Church of Jesus Christ.* If M. de Meaux do not think the visibility we allow to be sufficient, but his meaning be, that the condition of the Church upon Earth requires another of a different kind, one that may resemble that of the People of Rome, and the Republick of Venice, as the same Bellarmin speaks, he may argue that point as he shall see convenient; but still he must suppose all along, as we find Bellarmin does, and as in Truth and Equity he is obliged, that the Protestants do not absolutely deny the Churches Visibility; and by the same rule he will be likewise obliged to

* See this passage .
quoted
before out
of Bellarm.
de Ecclesia,
Lib. 3 Cap.
10. in the
Answer to
M. de
Meaux
his 9th
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to condemn all that first part of his Instruction to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, the whole business whereof is, to prove this Visibility, that is in plain terms, to prove a thing that no body ever denied or called in question.

I shall take the freedom to acquaint him in the second place, That whenever he shall undertake a dispute with us concerning the *Invisibility* of the Church, he must do it with some Distinction, and not confound an Invisibility, which we think cannot be separated from the Church, while continuing here upon Earth, with another sort of Invisibility, that is only accidental to it, and never happens but at some particular times. The first is what I took notice of, when discoursing of the Churches natural and ordinary Condition, and comes to concern it by reason of the internal form of the Members composing it, that is, true Faith, and undissembled Piety, which none but God alone can attain to a certain knowledg of. But the second is such a one as I mentioned, when speaking of the Churches being sometimes oppress'd, and over-run with counterfeit Christians, and superstitious People. The former necessarily follows from Hypocrites and Worldlings being mixt with true Believers in the same external Communion, from whence the Characters of true Faith become equivocal and doubtful. But the second arises from the Extravagances of those Hypocrites and Worldlings, when they endeavour to fill Religion with their Errors, and exorbitant Opinions. The first makes the Church not to be visible distinctly, but leaves it still an indistinct Visibility; my meaning is, it hinders us from discerning easily and certainly, what particular Persons are true Believers; but it does not hinder us from an obvious and certain knowledg, that there are some true Believers in it. But the second hinders even this indistinct Visibility of the Church, for it hinders its appearing clearly, and makes it hard for Men to judg, whether there be any true Believers in such a Society or no. From the first of these, we infer a necessity of examining Decisions, affirming, that we ought therefore to examine, because no Man can be sure that they are the Decisions of the true Church. The use we make of the second, is from thence to infer the necessity of our Reformation, affirming, that because Religion was manifestly changed, and overgrown with Superstitions and Errors, that the Ministry was corrupted, and the exterior State of the Church disordered and confus'd, it was consequently Mens duty to reform themselves. Unless this Distinction be first made, or at least supposed to be made by us, there is no help for it, but Men must dispute impertinently, and run every minute into false Conclusions.

M. de Meaux must also be content that I should tell him, He must not confound what we say of the Church, considered in her ordinary and natural State, with what we say of it, when considered in a weak and sick Condition; nor deduce any Consequences from one of these to the other. In my Opinion, this is a very reasonable Distinction; for we speak of a Man in a sound and healthful temper of Body, quite otherwise than we do, when looking upon him, as in a sickly Condition; and of a Kingdom when in peaceable and prosperous Circumstances, quite otherwise, than when embroiled in Factions and Tumults. Thus it is with the Church, she is not always in the same posture. Sometimes the outward appearance she makes, is all beautiful and commendable; but there are some other times when she is clouded too; sometimes her publick Worship is in all Points edifying; but at others it is mixt and unsincere; sometimes the Waters of her Ministry (if I may use so bold a Metaphor) flow clear and pure; but at other times they are loaded with Mud and Dirt. According to these different Conditions, our Expressions differ concerning her; we say things of her, considered in one respect, which are not by any means applicable to her in another; so that what is said upon this Subject, must never be stretcht beyond its due bounds. Nevertheless, this is the very Rock that M. de Meaux hath split upon in this Eleventh Reflection. For having taken notice of some Passages in my third Enquiry, which were spoken of the Church, with reference to her natural and ordinary State; he hath all along understood them, as spoken in an absolute and unlimited Sense; and drawn inferences from thence, as he thought most for his purpose, by adding to them some terms that are purely his Comment, and no part of my Original at all. For instance, looking upon the Church in this natural State, I had delivered my Opinion, that the Church was Visible, when mixed with Hypocrites, in such a manner, as good Corn was, when growing in the same Field with Tares; and this was sufficient to prove the true Church visible. *I bear this with Joy, says M. de Meaux, assuredly we shall advance; Mr. Claude gives it us already for manifest, that there shall be always a visible Body of which one may say, there are true Believers.* Here is an *always*, purely of his own Addition already. I had likewise said in that writing, That the visible Church is that Body of Jesus Christ, for the edifying whereof St. Paul says, God hath set some Apostles, and some Prophets, &c. *I continue to read his Answer, proceeds M. de Meaux, and I find that he blames me for imputing to the pretended Reformed, that they believe not the Body in which Christ has placed, according to St. Paul, some Apostles, some Teachers, some Pastors, and the rest to be the Church of Jesus Christ. How glad am I to be reprov'd, provided we advance! It is then manifest,*

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page 100.

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Ibid.

fest, that the Body of Jesus Christ which is his Church, shall always be composed of Pastors, of Teachers, of Preachers, and also of People: It is then consequently always very Visible, and the Succession of the Pastors, as well as that of the People, ought to be manifest in it. If a man need do no more, to make M. de Meaux thus exceeding joyful, but only grant that the Church is always Visible upon Earth, more or less, according to the different Circumstances she is in; Visible, even by the constant exercise of her Ministry, tho that Ministry may sometimes happen to be wretchedly corrupted; he will have no reason at all to complain of us, and we shall very heartily contribute to the keeping him in this pleasant humour. But he ought not in order to deducing this Consequence, to serve himself of passages that contain no such thing; he ought not to wrest the sense of Words, nor add of his own Head such terms as these, *Always*, very *Visible* and *Manifest*, that he never found there, nor can be inserted without utterly spoiling the form of my Argument; nor ought he to transfer what was spoken of the Church in its sound and regular State, to times of Confusion and Disorder.

Perhaps too it may not be amiss, to give M. de Meaux an intimation, That when men design to take an advantage of any Proposition which they pretend their Adversary hath acknowledged, his sense ought to be taken perfect and entire, without any defalcations, or balking any essential part of it. Now this is a Rule that M. de Meaux hath not kept to, how reasonable soever it be allowed in it self; and I will produce you here a very considerable instance of his not doing it. I grant an uninterrupted continuance of the Ministry in the Church; but I grant it with this proviso, that this Ministry may happen to be sometimes prodigiously corrupted, and God may permit many Errors to be introduced into it, and many Superstitions, which may plainly take off from the Churches Visibility. Now M. de Meaux, instead of relating my sense, as I my self had deliver'd it, affirms on the contrary, that it concerned only personal immoralities. But shall this Ministry, says he, last for ever so pure, that none but good people shall be admitted to it? We have seen, adds he, that Mr. Claude pretends it not. In effect there is no promise of this perpetual purity. The promise is, that whatsoever the manners of these Ministers may be, Jesus Christ will always Act, always Baptise, and always Teach with them, and the effect of this Ministry, tho mixt, shall be such, that under its Authority the Church shall be always visible. Who, when he reads these words, would not presently say, that, provided Mr. Claude's Adversary were but agreed, that the manners of the Ministers are not always pure and free from scandal, he desires no more, but grants all the rest readily? But this is by no means fair dealing, the immoralities of the Ministers,

Eng. Ref.
pag. 102.

sters, are not the business he discourses of, but the corruption of Doctrine and of Worship, which gave occasion for the Reformation. M. de Meaux can never acquit himself of indirect dealing in this particular.

Lastly, M. de Meaux must allow me to tell him, that in a controversy of such high concernment as this, it is not at all satisfactory to judicious and intelligent persons, for whom our writings should be principally designed, for a Man to put his Adversaries hypothesis into the form of an acknowledgment or concession, and then pretend to take advantage from thence, and start some little objections against it, I grant this method is allowable in disputing, provided it be used regularly; but then it is manifest withal, that unless the advantages pretended to be made of this, be very clear and decisive, something more must be done, and one of these two courses taken; either to examine what can be denied in their Principles, or to see what will bear a dispute in their Consequences, and accordingly argue against them. For, if the Principles be sound and good, and the Consequences from them well inferred, strong and directly to the point, you may raise Objections, and pretend to gain here and there a little ground, as long as you will, but still the main work will hold; and after all your pains, those that understand, and can judge, will say, you do but pick holes to no purpose. We desire M. de Meaux therefore, that he would please to examine, whether there be any thing in the several Propositions of which the Protestants opinions consist, considered as they have all along been represented to him hitherto, either false in it self, or incongruous in the Connexion; or whether the Consequences deduced from them, such as he hath already seen in my Writing, be either irrational in the deduction, or insufficient and weak in themselves; and to shew us wherein, and why they are so. For as to the advantages he pretends to make of what he says I granted him, we hope to make it appear, how vain they are, when we come to examine his thirteenth Reflection.

In the mean time, he must give us leave to remember, what out of his great Equity, and Christian Charity, he hath been pleased to grant us in this. *Let us not call, says he, if they will, by the Name of the Church, all that Exterior Profession; let us abstain from this name, since Mr. Claude is against it; and like true reasonable and peaceable Christians, let us endeavour to agree on the thing.* Not doubting now, but M. de Meaux speaks sincerely, and that he will be very well content to hold to this expedient of his own propounding, I do not really at all despair, but that we may by this means be brought to an Agreement in the main. Let us suppose then, for a thing no longer to be questioned between M. de Meaux and

me, that the name of Jesus Christ's true Church, is not to be given to all this *Exterior Profession*, but only to those of it who are true Believers; a Man then must be very defective in his understanding, not to perceive it very possible, and a thing which may easily and commonly happen, that Hypocrites and counterfeit Christians should get a majority in the Ecclesiastical Assemblies, and so carry all that is decided in them; and if this should be denied, it were the easiest thing in the world to prove it, and convince an Adversary, that it may happen so. Now from hence it follows, that in such a Case these would not be the decisions of the true Church, but of the pretended and counterfeit one, and consequently, that an Examination is absolutely necessary to give men full satisfaction in this point, and prevent their mistaking one for another. But now, if this Principle be once supposed, a second Inference will very easily be drawn from it, which is, that it may very well so fall out, that these hypocrites and counterfeit Christians, who are not really Jesus Christ's true Church, nor actuated by any other spirit but that of the World, may fill this *Exterior Profession* with Errors and Superstitions, and in such a Case, a Reformation would become absolutely and indispensably necessary. If once M. de Meaux and I come to an agreement upon either of these two Consequences, or the particulars from which they were derived, all that remains in Controversy between us will meet with a very speedy solution.

M. de Meaux's Twelfth Reflection Examined, concerning what he calls Mr. Claude's Objections.

WHat M. de Meaux calls my Objections here, are not properly mine, but answers to some that were started by himself. However I will at present allow them what name he pleases, reserving to my self still a right of rectifying, and discoursing of their nature more exactly, when there shall be any occasion for doing so.

The first of them he lays before us in these words, Mr. Claude objects to me, that I desire in vain to establish my Society, composed of Good and Bad, and its Eternal duration, on these inviolable Promises of Jesus Christ, Thou art Peter, and I am always with you. 'Tis not, says he, of the wicked, that it can be said, Hell shall not prevail against them. 'Tis not with wicked men and Hypocrites, that Jesus Christ hath promised always to be, and these Promises respect none but true Believers. M. de Meaux had applied the Promises of the Gospel to this Exterior Society, composed of Good and Bad, as sup-

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Eng. Ref.
p. 104.

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Eng. Refl.
Ibid.

posing them to be Jesus Christ's true Church; and to this I had replied, That those Promises could not respect any persons besides the true Believers only; because those True Believers were that very true Church to which Jesus Christ had made these Promises. Our present business is to enquire, whether this be a sufficient and well-grounded Answer. *Let us add, says M. de Meaux, according to Mr. Claude's Principles, that if these Promises respect only true Believers, they respect them at least in this Ministry, and in this Exterior Profession, and the Objection will be at the same time resolved. For in fine, if the true Believers ought to be always shown, and always visible, according to Mr. Claude, in this Exterior Profession, in which the good are mixt with the bad; it follows that this composition, by what name soever it is called, shall always appear on the Earth. Now none can be assured of a Society's subsisting always, and always in a visible state, unless God hath promised it. His Promises regard then even this mixture, and not only the true Believers, but with them all the Society, in which they ought, according to his Decrees, always to appear. By Consequence we must understand these Promises of Jesus Christ otherwise than Mr. Claude teaches.*

Rom. 7.
34, 36.

I am very sorry that a desire to support a bad Cause, should engage M. de Meaux in little subtilties, very unbecoming a Man of his parts and understanding. At the rate he argues here, it might be said too, that the Promise made by God to *Abraham*, That he would preserve his Seed under their slavery in *Egypt*, respected the *Egyptians* themselves also, because it was under their unjust Tyranny that the People of God should subsist. By the same Rule we might as well say, that Jesus Christ's Promise made to his Church, *of the Gates of Hell never prevailing against her*, respects Hell it self, and the Gates of it, because the Church must subsist among those conflicts which Hell shall put her upon. We should say too, that the Promise made to God's Elect, that they should be more than Conquerors over Persecution, and Distress, and Famine, and Peril, and Sword, as *St. Paul* assures us they shall, does likewise concern these dreadful temptations, because without them they could never become Conquerors. We must by the same reason say, that God's Promises of pardoning his Children their sins, as oft as they shall flee for sanctuary to his mercy and favour, regards those very sins they commit, because it is impossible God should pardon them, if they had not first committed them. M. de Meaux does not attend to this. There are several things which the Promises of God do, and must of necessity suppose, which yet must by no means be looked upon as things concerned, or having any part in those Promises, because their nature and quality are utterly repugnant to it. God Promises his people in *Isaiah*, *When they pass through the waters, the waters shall not overflow them,*

Isa. 43. 2.

them, and when they walk through the fire, they shall not be burnt; this necessarily implies, that there shall be both water and fire; but we cannot from thence infer, that God promises those waters, or that fire. God had in the *Old Testament* promised, that the *Messiah* should break the Serpents head, that he should be ruler in the midst of his enemies, and smite the heads over divers Countries; this supposes a Serpent, and Enemies, and Heads that should oppose him; but it cannot be inferred from thence, that God had promised this Serpent, or those Enemies and opposers. The Case is directly the same here, God promises to preserve, and continue his true Believers unto the end of the World, in this mixture of hypocrites and wicked men; and to continue them too under a corrupt Ministry; this indeed supposes, that there shall be wicked men and hypocrites, and a Ministry liable to corruptions; but the meaning of it can never be, that God promises the constant continuance of hypocrites and wicked men, or that a corrupt Ministry should last for ever. If there be hypocrites and wicked men at all times, if the corruption of the Ministry do last a great while, all this must be attributed, not to any virtue of God's Promise, but to another sort of Causes, of a Nature very different from any Promise of his.

What M. de Meaux urges, That *When God promised the Israelites plentiful Harvests, with the Corn he promised also the Chaff; and to preserve the Harvest, is to preserve the Chaff with the Corn*, signifies nothing at all. There is a vast difference between these two things. The Chaff is a means naturally and necessarily required, and designed for the production and preservation of the Corn, whence it comes to pass, that in promising the Corn, the * Chaff too is promised with it; because he that promises the End, does certainly engage to give all the natural and necessary means conducing to that End. But the mixture of wicked men with good, and the corruption of the Ministry, are so far from being any means, naturally designed for the Churches preservation, that, on the contrary, they tend directly to their ruine and destruction, because these very things are contained and implied in those Gates of Hell that wage war with her. We must say of them therefore, that their continuance is not by virtue of the Promise, but that, supposing them to subsist from some other Principle, God promises to assist his Church against them, and to prevent her being utterly ruined by their efforts against her.

Gen. 3.
Psalm 110.

Eng. Refl.
pag. 101.

* I have here all along translated *paille* by *Chaff*, because I would keep as near as I could to the word in M. de Meaux's English

Reflections; but it seems in some of the following passages rather to require such a rendering, as the straw, or husk of the Corn.

Eng. Refl.
Page 105.

But, says M. de Meaux, *The wicked also in the Church are for the Just, as the Chaff in the Harvest is for the Corn; and as God promises not the Chaff, either alone, or for it self; so he promises not the wicked, either alone, or for themselves. But nevertheless, all this Composition shall subsist in virtue of the Divine Promise, till the last Separation, when the wicked, as the Chaff, shall be cast into the fire that shall never be quencht. In the mean time Jesus Christ shall be always with the whole Composition.*

Eng. Re-
flect. p.
101.
* It should
be defini-
tion.

It is not true, that the wicked are for the just, in such a manner as the Chaff in the Harvest is for the Corn; This assertion can never be made good, and would be liable to several very pernicious Consequences. If the wicked were for the just, as the Chaff is for the Corn, then must they of necessity be at the first intended by God, in order to composing the Church, as the Chaff is at first intended by Nature, in order to producing the Harvest. Now this can never be affirmed, and M. de Meaux hath already forgot, that he himself acknowledged in the foregoing Reflection, *That without doubt, 'tis not Jesus Christ's first intent, there should be Ministers that are deceivers; this happens only through the malice of the Enemy. The * distinction of the Ministry is for true Believers; Jesus Christ did not establish it to call into the Church deceivers and hypocrites.* And yet we should be forced to own that he did, if the Wicked were for the Just, as the Chaff is for the Corn. God produced the Earth for the production of the Chaff, that by means of this Chaff it might produce the Harvest; to make the Comparison equal, Jesus Christ must have ordained the Ministry, for the calling into it Lying and Deceitful Ministers, that so by them he might bring about the Conversion of the Just. These Wicked persons, as I have argued already, must then needs have been a means that hath a natural tendency of it self to such a production and preservation of the Just, as the Chaff hath a tendency to the production and preservation of the Corn. Now this no man can say, if he will speak consistently either with Religion, or sound sense. Thus all that M. de Meaux hath built upon a slippery and false foundation, totters, and cannot stand.

If he could have satisfied himself with affirming, that God hath promised by the wisdom of his good providence, which brings good out of evil, to change the natural use of hypocrites and wicked men, and make even these sometimes, contrary to any intention of their own, instrumental to the Salvation of his dear Children; could he have been but content to say, that God hath promised by the same wise and good providence, to stop the growth of Corruption, when it hath got ground in the Ministry, and not suffer it to proceed to such a degree, as shall make the Salvation of his Children impossible to be obtained; or that,

that, if he did give way to this, he would provide some other means for his Churches subsistence, and the Ministries too; he would have said nothing but what we should have concurred with him in the confession of, and what is really true. But to assert, as he does, that God promises the wicked, and that the subsistence of the unjust and impostors, depends upon the strength of that Divine Promise, as that of the Chaff or Straw does upon the promise of the Harvest, is, as far as I am able to judge of it, a sort of Theology, that cannot meet with many abettors.

Further yet; Besides, That this Doctrine is false in it self, I aver, that it is of no advantage at all to *M. de Meaux*. Tho we should suppose, as he would have us, that this Composition of good and bad Men, this exterior Profession, as he phrases it, will for ever subsist upon Earth, by Virtue of Gods Promises, and that it will always continue Visible too, by a Ministry in the hands, sometimes of good, and sometimes of corrupt Ministers; yet how would this be any security to us, that the wicked should not add their own Errors and false Worship, to the outward Profession they make of the Gospel? Which way could this prevent false Labourers, that sometimes get possess of the Ministry, from mixing their own erroneous Opinions with the sound Doctrine they teach, and leavening it with their own Superstitions? Might not the true Church subsist still for some time in this Composition, tho with a great deal of difficulty, as Men subsist in times of Oppression and Calamity? Might not she be in some degree Visible for all this too, tho sometimes obscurely, and as it were under a Cloud? And when the wicked should carry on their Oppression to such an Extremity, as threatens the Church with utter Ruin and Extinction; might not God notwithstanding all this, restore to her, her former Visibility, by reforming the Ministry in this very Composition, as well in regard of the Persons themselves, as their Doctrines, Worship and Discipline? Can *M. de Meaux* pretend, that, supposing God had really promised to preserve this Composition to the end of the World, the meaning of this could be, that a great, nay the greatest part might not fall off, and that the most beautiful, pure and visible Part, would not still be the same Composition, as before that falling off? This Composition extended heretofore over the *Eastern, Western and Southern* parts of the World; how many such fallings off happened then, into how many parcels was this Body divided? Some one of all these there is, that can say, It is the same Composition as formerly; because otherwise, the Promises of God would not have been accomplished. In order, therefore, to its being still the same Composition, there is no necessity it should be exactly of the same extent,

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Eng. Refl.
p. 92, 93,
94.

nor retain the same exterior Form, nor appear just in the same Features and Lineaments; had this been requisite, this Composition had disappeared, and consequently the true Church ceased upon Earth long ago. What then is necessary to warrant its being called still the same Composition? M. de Meaux hath taught us in his ninth Reflection, *The Elect*, says he, that is, the true Believers, *are Essential to the Church*. If there were none of these left, it would cease to be the same Composition; so long as there are any, it continues still the same. Let M. de Meaux then ground the Subsistence upon what he pleases, the strength of Gods Promise, or any thing else, this will do him no Service; because still, when there shall happen a Separation, the Part in which we can affirm that true Believers remain, must be lookt upon as the part, in which the Composition subsists; tho the less considerable for Number, tho deserted by the greatest part of the Ministers, tho there be some Alterations made by it in Doctrine, in Discipline and Worship, as it was in the case of the Reformation; and by the Rule of Contraries, the other part, which we cannot affirm the same thing of, that is, that the Elect and true Believers continue in it, must only be considered as a Part fallen off, and cut away from this Composition, and no better. Thus both the Parts are Visible, but one of them wants what M. de Meaux hath declared to be *Essential* to the Church, and the other hath it. Thus the whole matter depends upon an Enquiry, where the true Believers are. The true Faith Answers that Question; The Elect are Essential to this Composition, M. de Meaux hath determined them so to be; this then must be sought for, where these Believers may be found, and no where else.

Afterwards M. de Meaux descends to another Objection, which he pretends I put to him,

Eng. Refl.
p. 105.

He Objects to me, says he, *that in defining the Catholick Church mentioned in the Creed, I speak only of the Church which is actually on Earth, instead of comprehending in it all the Elect, which have been, are, and shall be, and in fine with the Holy Angels, all the Heavenly Jerusalem. I have already answered him, that I neither would, nor was obliged to define the Church, but in relation to our Subject, and her Visibility.*

I never objected any thing of all this to M. de Meaux, but, in regard he had charged the Protestants with misunderstanding that Article of the Creed, I explained their opinion of it, and said as much to confirm it, as I thought was needful for their justification. Besides, I did not take the Angels into my Idea of the Catholick Church, but only said, that St. Augustin had taken them into his; and I said moreover, that in *this* he went beyond us, which is quite contrary to what M. de Meaux makes us say.

say. And for what he either would, or was obliged to do, when he defined the Church, I have told him my thoughts sufficiently already, in my Examination of his Ninth Reflection.

But, says he, *I add, that according to Mr. Claude's own Principles, I said all; for, according to him, in the Exterior Profession, that is, in what renders the Church visible, may be markt the true Believers, with whom all the Saints, in what time and place soever they may be, not excepting the Holy Angels, are united.*

Eng. Refl.
Ibid.

I must needs own, that I do not perfectly conceive M. de Meaux his meaning in this place. Does he mean, that by restraining the term *Universal Church* to the Exterior Society at present upon Earth, a Man does at the same time comprehend the Church now in Heaven, and that part which is yet unborn too, upon this account, that the true Believers now in this Society, are united with all the Saints and Elect Children of God, in what time and place soever they may be? This is just as if I should say, that when by this word, *the Universal Map*, I understand only the particular Map of *France*, I do nevertheless at the same time, include in the signification of this word, all the parts of the Earth, because they are all united with *France*, and one another; or, as if I should say, that understanding by this term, *The whole World*, one single Star, I do yet comprehend in the signification of that term, all other Creatures whatever, because the rest of the Creatures, and this Star together, make up but one World. I fancy now, that the signification of a word when confined to some particular part, is not the same, as when it is extended to the whole of a thing. But, says he, *when I shall have found the true Believers actually present on Earth, I shall by the same means have found both that Church which is already in Heaven, and that which God will cause to grow up in all following Ages.* All this I grant. But this does not argue, that the signification of *Universal Church* must be restrained to that Exterior Society, which contains the true Believers, no more than it follows, that those words, *The Kingdom of France*, must be restrained to the Town of *Orleans*, only upon a pretence, that when once you have found *Orleans*, you will have found the Kingdom of *France*.

Eng. Refl.
Pag. 106.

What he says afterwards, That *when under the name of the Catholick Church he understood the Church which is upon Earth, he spoke with all the Fathers, and with the Council of Nice, which calls it Apostolick*; seems more directly for his purpose. But, besides that St. *Augustin*, who hath no reason to be excluded the number of the Fathers, hath taken this expression in a more extensive sense, as hath been frequently said before; besides too, that this second Answer is evacuated, and made useless by the

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p. 2.

the former; because, if *M. de Meaux* said all, when he said *the Church, that is upon Earth*, the Fathers will have said all, when they have said *the Apostolick Church*, and added to it, *toto Orbe diffusa*, spread over the whole World; not to insist upon this, I say, the business *M. de Meaux* and I are concerned for, is not properly to enquire whether it be ill done, by the *Catholick Church*, to understand the Church that is upon Earth; but whether interpreting that Article of our Creed which respects the *Catholick Church*, in a sense that shall comprise the whole Mystical Body of *Jesus Christ*, be to corrupt and deprave that Article, as ill as the *Arrians*, *Macedonians*, and *Socinians* do other parts of the Creed. For this is the purport of that heavy charge brought by *M. de Meaux* against the Protestants. There is an Article of the Creed, says he, they believe not; which is, that of the *Universal Church*. 'Tis true, they say with the mouth, I believe the *Catholick*, or *Universal Church*, as the *Arrians*, *Macedonians*, and *Socinians* say with the mouth, I believe in *Jesus Christ*, and in the *Holy Ghost*. But as there is reason to accuse them of not believing these Articles, because they believe them not as they ought, nor according to their true sense; so if we shew the *Pretended Reformed*, that they believe not, as they ought, the Article of the *Catholick Church*, we may truly say, that in effect they reject so important an Article of the Creed. This then is primarily and mainly to be lookt upon, not as one of my Objections, but as one of *M. de Meaux* his own. So that it signifies nothing at all to the purpose, to tell us, he hath taken the Name of the Church in the same meaning which the Fathers, and the Council of *Nice* put upon it; for it does not follow from thence, that that sense which the Protestants put upon it, concurring herein with *St. Augustin*, and the Council of *Trent* too, may not be the true; nor this is any such depravation of the Creed, as the *Arrians*, *Macedonians*, and *Socinians* were guilty of. This is a thing, that neither the Fathers, nor the *Nicene Council* ever taught him.

M. de Meaux's Thirteenth Reflection examined, wherein he pretends to shew, that according to Mr. Claude's own Doctrine, there is no Salvation for Protestants, but in the Roman-Church.

THIS Thirteenth Reflection, the very Title whereof, as is plain, leaves a Man in mighty expectation, does nevertheless contain nothing, but some very trivial Objections, such as have been long ago urged against our Reformation, and already confuted over and over. I know very well, that some, for whose advantage it is to keep up a constant intercourse of Disputations, do revive them daily, without taking the least notice of the Answers that have been returned to them heretofore; But I will be bold to say, that *Monsieur de Meaux* did them a great deal of honour, when He condescended to make use of them. However, such as they are, I will examine them, as they are propounded by him; and whereas they are of two sorts, some indirect, and go upon a pretence of settling a point in question; and others direct, and more open; I will begin with the first sort of them.

Object. 1. *There must be, says M. de Meaux, without any interruption, an Exterior Profession, of which it may be said, There are the true Believers. Thus it is not sufficient to alledge at random to us, concealed Believers; they are obliged to shew us without interruption, first a Visible Society, of which may be said, They are there; 'tis there they serve God in Spirit and Truth; 'tis there they confess the Gospel.*

Eng. Refl.
page 108.

Ans. We acknowledg this Exterior Profession *without interruption*, in such a manner, as *M. de Meaux* must acknowledg it to have continued in *Judah*, during the Reigns of *Abaz* and *Manasseh*, and in the time when that people was most grievously corrupted; since he himself confesses, *That God still reserved to himself a sufficient number of Servants, who participated not in the Idolatry.* We acknowledg such a continuance of it, as must be acknowledged among the *Jews* afterwards, during the corruptions of the Priests, the Pharisees, and the Scribes, who sat in *Moses* his Chair in our Saviour *Christ's* time, and who nevertheless mingled their own false traditions, and superstitious inventions, with that Prophet's sound Doctrine, as *M. de Meaux* himself owns. In this profession, even when it was at the worst, and most corrupted, yet still there were, some *Zacharias*, some *Josephs*, some *Simeons*, some *Nathanaels*,
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Pag. 17.

Rom. 11. 5.

that never were partakers of the publick depravations. We acknowledg such a one, as St. Paul acknowledged in the same people, when the whole body of that Nation persecuted the Gospel; God, says the Apostle, *hath not cast away his people; at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* We acknowledg, in short, such a one, as St. Athanasius, St. Augustin, and St. Hilary acknowledg under the Tyranny of the Arrian Heresy, at which time, even when the corruption of the wicked was at the very highest pitch, God did still preserve some true Believers in the Exterior Profession; so that it might be said, *They are there.* It is evident, that the Errors and Superstitions, predominant in an Exterior Profession, do not hinder its continuing for ever, so long as the good can separate between the clean and the unclean, and by this means secure themselves from the corruptions of false Brethren. If M. de Meaux should go about to deny this Truth, he would contradict himself, he would oppose plain experience and matter of fact; he would run counter to St. Augustin, and counter even to the Scriptures themselves.

Eng. Refl.
pag. 100.

Object. 2. *Nor will it be enough to shew us these Believers dispersed; they must, secondly, shew them us gathered together, under the Authority of an Ecclesiastical Ministry, with the Preaching of the Word, with the Administration of the Sacraments, with the use of the Keys, and all the Ecclesiastical Government.*

Ans. As we acknowledg the Exterior Profession, so do we in the same manner acknowledg the Ecclesiastical Ministry, that is, in truth, both the one and the other exceedingly changed and depraved; just as they were during the Reigns of Abaz, and Manasseh, and the Priesthood of Urijah; such as they were under the Corruptions of the Priests, and Pharisees, and Scribes in Jesus Christ's time; such as they were under the Administration of Arrian Bishops, in St. Hilary's and St. Athanasius's time. Whatever M. de Meaux shall think fit to say of that time, the same shall be our reply for that immediately before the Reformation. 'Tis a received Principle, that the Corruptions of the Ministry, tho never so gross, do not take away its subsistence, so long as it can still afford good men such Doctrines as are sufficient for their Salvation; and leaves them still at liberty to separate these from other false Doctrines, and false Innovations in matters of Practice, superinduced by the Ministers. If M. de Meaux shall think fit to call the truth of this second Clause into question, I must desire him to inform us by what methods the Ministry was preserved without interruption, among those many

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corruptions in *Judab* before the *Babylonish* Captivity; which way it was preserved afterwards, in the midst of those corruptions that happened since the Captivity; by what means it subsisted still in *Christ's* and the *Apostles* times; and again, how it was kept up during all the most violent invasions of the *Arrian* Heresy, when the World was so generally seized with that distemper; and what the reason could be, that the *Fathers* of the *Alexandrian* Council did not re-ordain the *Bishops*, who had revolted to the *Hereticks*, at their return to the *Orthodox* Faith.

Object. 3. By consequence, they must shew us a Society of Pastors and People, whence it follows in the third place, that they must be able to name us these Pastors, since the Succession of them is manifest. To seek all this in the Pretended Reformed Church, as it is now separated from the Roman Church, is what *Mr. Claude* does not so much as dream of; 'tis enough for him, that to the time of the Pretended Reformed's Separation, he finds all this in the Roman Church it self. The true Believers were there, as long as those that composed the Pretended Reformation were there; when they went forth, or were driven forth, they carried the Church with them; as *Mr. Claude* said in the Conference; This Discourse, more like a Raillery than a serious Discourse, is nevertheless that which is seriously held in the new Reformation.

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Eng. Refl.
p. 108.

Ans. If *M. de Meaux* his meaning be, that he would have us draw him an exact Pedigree, and show particularly the Succession and descent of all that have discharged the Ministerial Office well, or ill, through all those obscure Ages of the Church, that would be a task too tedious. But however, since he is so desirous it should be done, we will give him some particular instances. For, as the Scripture hath left us upon record the names of *Urias*, *Annas*, and *Caiaphas* High Priests; and as Ecclesiastical History afterwards preserved those of *Valens*, *Ursacius*, *Germanius*, *Auxentius*, *Eusebius* of *Nicomedia*, and several others of that Gang from being forgotten; so have we also retained in memory such as *Nicolas* the second, *Gregory* the seventh, *Innocent* the third, *Innocent* the fourth, *Boniface* the eighth, *Eugenius* the fourth, *Alexander* the sixth, *Julius* the second, and many more besides, who were very unfaithful Stewards of the Ministry committed to them. Now, as on the other side, the Scripture hath signalized the names of *Zacharias*, *Nathanael*, and *Gamaliel*, and as the History of the Primitive times hath delivered down to us, those of *Athanasius*, *Hilary*, *Phebadius*, *Eusebius* of *Vercelli*, and *Lucifer* of *Cagliari*, who valiantly withstood the incursions of *Arrianism*; So likewise the History of Latter times, hath also left an honourable mention of *Berengarius* Archdeacon of *Angers*, of one *Honorius*,

Priest of *Anthun*, of one *Robert* Bishop of *Lincoln*, one *Nicholas de Clemangis* Archdeacon of *Bayeux*, one *John* of *Salisbury*, one *John Wickliff* Doctor and Professor of *Oxford*, one *John Hufse*, and one *Jerome* of *Prague*, and several other persons, who in the midst of the Corruptions that the Age they lived in was debauched with, were eminently useful, and mighty instruments of the Churches preservation.

Moreover, If the Church of *Judah* might, after its several Reformation, reckon in the succession of its Ministry, not only the good Priests and Levites that had been in it, but those too, who had by their extravagancies and errors infected the Ministry, and by that means evince its perpetuity; And that, because even then, when those Errors and Corruptions were at the highest, the true Church did subsist still under their Government; If the Christian Church in like manner, might be allowed to reckon in the Succession of hers, not only such as *Athanasius* and *Hilary*, but others also, and such as were tainted with *Arrianism*, because, that even while their Heresy prevailed most, God continued to preserve true Believers under their Ministry, notwithstanding the abominable corruptions of it; If Jesus Christ himself did, without any scruple, own those very Scribes and Pharisees, in whose Doctrine and Practice both he had detected such horrid abuses (for Ministers *sat in Moses his Chair*) What reason hath *M. de Meaux* to deny that which he calls the Pretended Reformed Church the like priviledg, of reckoning, as they did, in her Line of Succession, not only those brave men who durst boldly and openly oppose abuses and superstitions, but others also that were infected and stained with them, since she acknowledges, that God still continued to preserve his Children and Elect under their evil Administration? A Ministry, wherein there is a mixture of good and evil, does not presently cease to be the same Ministry by being Reformed, that is, by having the Evil part taken away, and the Good only left behind; no more than a weak distempered body ceases to be still the same body, when recovered of the disease that brought it into that weak condition. If *M. de Meaux* dispute this third Answer, I could wish he would impart to us his own notion of the Ministry of *Judah* in *Achaz* his Reign, and how this was the same with what *Hezekiah* reformed, and purged from the Corruptions that had crept into it. For, if it was not the same Ministry afterwards, then the succession of the Priesthood in *Judah* was interrupted, which is a thing that *M. de Meaux* assures us never happened; and, if it was the same Ministry still, then a Reformation does not change the species of the Ministry, although it alter the present Condition and Circumstances of it. Let him please to inform us too, how he understands the Ministry, when stained with *Arrianism*, to have

have remained the same in substance, after it returned to the True Orthodox Faith. For if it did not remain the same, then the Bishops upon their retraction ought to have been ordained over again; and if it did continue the same, then returning to the primitive purity of Doctrine and Worship, does not argue a Ministry to be new.

M. de Meaux cannot away with being told, that when we went forth, or were driven forth of the *Romish* Communion, we carried the Church along with us; and he represents such Discourse to be more like Railery than serious Discourse: But let him look upon it as he pleases, it is still truth at the bottom, and so great a truth as we shall never question in the least. God Almighty keep us from being scandalized at the meanness, the poverty, the sufferings, and the reproaches, with which the World loads a Profession that hath truth and purity of its side, and from even imagining, that these false prejudices hinder it from being the Church. God Almighty preserve us from suffering the splendor of riches, of dignities, and worldly greatness, that attend the contrary Profession, to blind our eyes, and impose upon our understandings so far, that these adventitious beauties should make that pass for the true Church with us. Where true Faith and Worship is, there is the Church. Now this is a treasure that goes along with us, that we have brought away with us when we separated; so that the Church is on our side. And in truth, when we seriously reflect upon this mighty favour vouchsafed us by God, we can never extol it as it deserves, nor mention it with too profound a veneration; But when we look withal how far the pretensions of the Church of *Rome* extend in this particular, they appear to be so very odd, and so utterly groundless, that we have much ado to forbear a disdainful smile at the extravagance of them.

Object. 4. *But whence came their Pastors? Were they also detach'd with these pretended Believers from the Body of the Roman Church, to perpetuate in the Church thus Reformed the Ecclesiastical Ministry? In no wise, Mr. Claude does not understand it so. The Faithful detach'd from the Roman Church, all on a sudden deposed all the Pastors which were before; that is to say, that before, the Catholick Bishops and Priests, with the Pope at their head, were the Pastors establish'd by Jesus Christ; for there must be such for the true Believers, which they contained in their Unity; in the moment that the Reformation appeared, they were all on a sudden deposed, and the Ministry taken out of their hands. But what right had private persons thus all on a sudden, and in one moment to dispossess all their Pastors? 'Tis because they are the true Believers to whom the Ministry appertains of Right, who might consequently dispose of it, take it from some, and give it to others.*

Eng. Refl.
p. 108, 109

Answer

Part 4.
Chap. I.

Ans. No body ever told M. de Meaux, that the Church was at any time reduced to such extremities, as actually to deprive all her Pastors of their Ministry. That word *All* is perfectly an addition of his own, and does not appear in any of the passages alledged by him out of my Writings; but if he had besides taken the pains to consult what I have spoken to this purpose in my *Defence of the Reformation*, where I have at large explained what the Protestants Principles upon this point are in their utmost extent, He would have met with something very contrary to what is fixed upon me by him here. For thus I deliver my self in that Book: *It is manifest, not only that all the Pastors did not oppose the Reformation, but moreover, that in most places that reformed, the men that shewed themselves most warm and vigorous in promoting it, were persons considerable, both for their office and dignities in the Latin Church, who had as much a Call, as can in reason be desired, to preserve the band of Unity entire, and summon Assemblies together. It is further very certain, that in several Reformed Countries, this Change was made with the consent of the greater part of the Clergy, particularly, in England, in Scotland, in Sweden, in Denmark, in Saxony, in the Palatinate, in the Landgrave of Hesse's Principality, in Suiterland, and in many Towns and States of Germany. So that it may be truly affirmed of these several Reformed Countries, that, upon their separation from the Romish Communion, they did not assemble on their own heads, but maintained still an Exterior Society, under the lawful Ministry of a competent and very considerable number of Pastors, who gathered them together into one Body; or rather indeed, who prevented their scattering from one another, and preserved the band of unity undissolved amongst them. Among these there were some persons of Religious Houses, some Preachers, some Priests, some Parochial Pastors, some Canons, some Doctors, some Professors in Divinity, whole Universities, some Abbots, some Bishops, some Archbishops, some Cardinals; and if the See of Rome had not obstinately denied all access to the light of the Gospel, there might have been even Popes themselves too, for some of these were highly sensible what necessity there was for a Reformation. However, it may be proved, that there were still in the Body of those Pastors, a remnant according to the Election of Grace; as St. Gregory Nazianzen hath observed upon the like occasion, there was in the time of the Arrian Heresy. Thus far I have related my own express words, from whence it appears, how little reason M. de Meaux had to tax me with another kind of opinion in the case.*

The Protestant Pastors are of two sorts, either such as at the first laboured in bringing about the Reformation; or else such as were ordained afterwards, when the separation was made. The former sort received their Ministry, in the way it was then conveyed under the Government of the Romish Church, that is, after a very impure and defective man-

manner; but it was a Ministry still, and proportionably to the good it had left, a lawful one; tho unlawful, so far as it was corrupted. This God Almighty in his goodness was pleased to cleanse, and bring it back again to its true, natural, and primitive Institution; but to this beginning of his favour, he added also that of his blessing upon their endeavours; and causing almost infinite companies of men, by the help and advantage of their instructions, to open their eyes, admit the light, and receive the Reformation. Now this very thing was a seal and confirmation of their Call, as well on God's part, as his Churches. As for the other Pastors appointed afterwards, they received their Ministry, not only as having it communicated to them by the former sort; but which is more, by having their persons lawfully chosen by the Church to that Office, and Consequently obtained it by a purer, and more lawful and fairer method, than it was wont to be conferred before the Reformation.

As for the other Ministers, that set themselves in direct opposition against the Reformation, and did boldly and publickly declare themselves enemies to such proceedings, what pretence is there for an Argument, that our Fathers were still obliged to own them for their true and lawful Pastors? They put themselves forward; and became the most fiery and zealous vindicators of what our Fathers lookt upon to be no better than Error and Superstition. In their Assemblies they had decreed Articles of Divine Faith, and imposed the belief and practice of them under the highest Obligations, and the penalties of *Anathemas*. The Reformation, which our Fathers judged a very holy and indispensably necessary work, they had condemned for a heinous and mortal sin. They had, according as the Protestants Principles interpreted the thing, made a Schism in the Church with abundance of pomp and publick formality, and by this means created a division between Brethren, not only, when it was neither reasonable, nor necessary, but directly against both reason and necessity. In a word, they carried things to such an extravagant height, as at last to have recourse to open violence, and occasion the shedding a great deal of innocent blood every where. How can M. de Meaux pretend, that these ought to be still acknowledged by the Protestants for good and faithful Ministers? We find indeed, that Jesus Christ Commissioned his Disciples, *Go and teach all Nations*; but we do not meet with any such additional passage as this, *and them that refuse to receive your Doctrines, knock them on the head, and cut them to pieces*. We find that he establishd *Pastors and Teachers for the gathering together of the Saints*; but we do not find that he gave them authority utterly to root out, and exterminate all that refused to assemble under them.

Matt. 28.

Ephes. 4.

Per-

Persecution was never any badge of the Christian Ministry. M. de Meaux may enjoy his own Opinion in the Case; but for our parts, we think it very rational to say, that before all these things happened, the Bishops and Priests, *with the Pope in the head of them*, might be considered in one respect as the Pastors of the *Latin Church*; tho in another respect, they were at the same time the Churches enemies and oppressors; but when they had carried on their violence and oppression to that height we just now spoke of, they had manifestly devested themselves of all the right that could be pretended to afterwards, and of all Authority over our Ancestors; and those Ancestors of ours were not only to be commended for withdrawing themselves from under their guidance, but they would have been mightily to blame if they had done otherwise.

After the same manner, many Believers in the *Eastern* and *Western* parts forsook the Guidance of those who had formerly been acknowledged to be their lawful Pastors. They composed the Body of Bishops and Priests, every whit as much as the *Latin Prelates* M. de Meaux speaks of; they attributed to themselves the name of Catholicks as much as they; they had a Pope and Patriarchs at the head of them, just as these last had; and yet, notwithstanding all this, the Faithful separated from them, and would not own them for their lawful Pastors any longer; and all upon the very same accounts that moved our Fathers to disown the Ministry of M. de Meaux his Prelates. Thus also in the Fifteenth Century, the whole Kingdom of *France*, who till that time had acknowledged *Benedict* the Thirteenth, seated in the Papal Chair of *Avignon*, for the lawful Pastor of the Universal Church, did yet upon much weaker motives, than what our Fathers went upon, publicly and solemnly detract their obedience to him and to his Clergy, and did not own the other Pope, who was set up in opposition to him, neither. When the Conduct of the Bishops and Priests is manifestly contrary to the natural institution and design of the Ministry; when it becomes prejudicial to the Salvation of the Believers under their Charge, and to the preservation and continuance of the Church; tho they were ten times as many as met in the Council of *Trent*; and where they have but one, could shew a Hundred Popes in the head of them; I do aver, that the Fear of God, and a sense of Religion oblige us to leave them there, and acknowledg them for our Ministers no longer. If M. de Meaux does not think this sound Divinity, we are sorry for it; but for all that, we shall keep close to the determination of Christ's Disciples in the Case, who returned this Answer to the Council of Chief Priests and Scribes,

Acts 4.19.

Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judg ye.

Object.

Object. 5. *They should then at least, according to these Principles, have expected the decisions of Trent; and since, before those decisions, so many Churches separated from Rome, had already given themselves Pastors, the Reformation will have begun by a manifest Usurpation.*

Meaux's
Eng. Refl.
P. 159.

Ans. They should not, according to these Principles, have expected one minute longer. Is it M. de Meaux his opinion, that the Protestants, who were verily perswaded, the Worship of the *Roman Church* was superstitious, and its Doctrines opposite to the purity of the Gospel, ought to have continued in the publick profession of these, contrary to all sincerity, and the dictates of their own Consciences? Can he think it was their duty to communicate in these, at the very time they condemned them, and required a Reformation? But our Fathers were plain honest men, not acquainted with all these subtilties; they shewed a serious sense of Religion, so that it was necessary for them, from that time forward, to separate negatively at least, that is, not to partake in what they judged to be evil, and displeasing to Almighty God. Besides, the Court of *Rome*, and all her Prelates, had already, long before the Council of *Trent*, made such publick and peremptory declarations against all Reforming, that there was not any thing of redress to be expected from their Ministry for the future. They had already let loose all their Preachers and Writers upon it, to stifle it in its birth, and blacken it with railings and slanders. They had already condemned it publicly in their Schools and Universities; The Pope himself had already thundered out his Excommunicating Bulls against it, and the Emperor published his bloody Edict of *Worms* against *Luther* and his Followers; and the Persecution had shewed it self already every where in the most violent and tragical manner that could be. And now what could be hoped for from these pretended Pastors, who had made such manifest discoveries of their inclinations already?

And yet, notwithstanding all this, it is evident, that the Protestants never declined any peaceful Conferences, with those very persons that put them to death; and it is as evident further, that they did, by the most earnest applications, and the most rational Arguments possible, several times demand a free Council, where things might be searcht into and amended, in the fear of God, and by the Rules of Christianity. Now this was an irrefragable Argument of their unfeigned desire to see unity and concord between the two parties settled again, provided that Truth might suffer no injury by such an accommodation. If after all this, M. de Meaux be still of opinion, that the Churches had no right to reform themselves, nor to go off from their obedience to the See of

Rome, nor hearken to the Reformed Ministers ; but that in doing so, they became guilty of a *manifest usurpation* ; we shall tell him, with his Lordship's good leave, that we cannot for our hearts think, as he does of the matter ; and, that on the contrary, we look upon what was done by our Fathers, as a Just, Heroical, and a Christian Act, an Act that contributed much to God's Glory, and for which his name ought to be for ever bless'd and praised.

Eng. Refl.
Page 110.

Object. 6. *Such is Mr. Claude's Doctrine; if I change, if I exaggerate, if I diminish, let him without delay publish his writing to confound me. But if this be his Doctrine, I conjure our Reformed to consider what prodigies of Doctrine must be taught to defend their Reformation. For first, where do they read, in what Gospel, in what Epistle, in what writing of the Old or New Testament, that all the Pastors of the Church should in a moment fall from their Chair, and become private persons, whom one might and ought freely disobey? Has Jesus Christ hidden this great Mystery from us? And would he not have precaution'd us against this horrible Temptation of his Church?*

Ans. It is not with the least design to *confound M. de Meaux*, that I publish my writing now ; I have too great a regard for his Person, and too high an esteem for his worth, to make the occasioning him any personal Displeasure, part of my intention. I own, he hath related the passages of my writing faithfully, and he will find them just as he hath transcribed them, in the piece I lately publisht. But it is neither any confounding thing, nor indeed so very extraordinary for a man in the midst of a dispute, sometimes to take ones Adversaries Expressions in a sense different from what they ought to be taken in ; and *M. de Meaux*, who pretended in his ninth Reflection, that I was guilty of the like mistake, and who thought he was obliged to let me know my fault, did not, as I apprehend, intend thereby to *confound* and expose me. These are only misunderstandings, and want of presence of mind, things that all Men living are subject to, and all of it depends upon mens being more or less intent upon the matter. So that *M. de Meaux* his fame will not be less celebrated and glorious, by telling him, that tho he gave a faithful Relation of what I said, yet he put upon it a Construction beyond what the words could be extended to. For, as I observed upon the foregoing Objection, I never said, That *all the Pastors of the Church fell in a moment from their Chairs, and were become private Persons, whom one might, and ought freely to disobey.* This he will never be able to find in any of my Writings ; and he will indeed meet with the direct contrary in some of them, as hath been made appear by the passage I alledged out of

of the Book I wrote in defence of the Reformation. This passage he might very well be supposed to be acquainted with, because he told me himself at our meeting, that he had read the Book.

He should therefore alter his Objection, and retrench it only, to the requiring some Passages of Scripture to be produced, whereby it appears, that a great number, or if you please, the major part of the Pastors of the Church, should so grossly prevaricate from the Purity of the Gospel, and consequently fall from their Chairs. Whereupon, I shall also enquire of him in the first place, Whether there be any such Passages in Scripture, as intimate, that not only the greatest part, but almost all the Pastors of the Church, should fall into *Arianism*, and for that reason be lookt upon as fallen from the Episcopacy, unless they repented of their Defection from the Truth, and returned to the Orthodox Religion. I will desire him to shew me some passages of Scripture, implying, that Three hundred thirty and eight Bishops convened in a Council at *Constantinople*, should in a moment fall from their Chairs, and become private Persons, whom one might and ought freely disobey, for having determined the pretended Herefy of the *Iconoclastæ*.

Does not *M. de Meaux* consider, That Proofs from Holy Scripture are not to be expected, when such things are in debate, as happen according to the common course of Nature. Now, consider the Prelates how you will, either as many, or as few; as assembled, or not assembled; as having a Pope at the head of them, or not having one; still they are men, and consequently, according to the common course of Nature, liable to Extravagancies and Failings. If *M. de Meaux* be desirous to exempt them from this common condition of Mankind, then it must lie upon him to produce Texts of Scripture, because they are not ordinary Accidents, but extraordinary Priviledges; which should be proved by him. There is no Man that requires Texts of Scripture to convince him that he is subject to Diseases and Death, as the rest of Men are; but if he should pretend to be excepted out of this general Rule, then it must be his business to prove the Justice and Truth of those Pretensions.

And yet after all, *M. de Meaux* knows well enough, That there are Passages enough in Scripture, which makes these Corruptions and Misbehaviours in the Ministry, to be no surprising thing to us, when they fall out. Thus *Isaiab* speaking of Gods Ancient People, said, *His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough; they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.* After the same

Isa. 55. 10,

11.

- Jer. 2. 8. manner God complains by the mouth of *Jeremiah*, *That the Priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the Law, knew him not; the Pastors also transgress against him, and the Prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. Jesus Christ himself hath not left us un-forewarned in this particular, Beware, says he, of false Prophets, that come to you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves.* But St. Paul
- Matt. 7. 15. hath delivered himself upon this Subject, in terms sufficiently intelligible; for, not to insist upon some Passages elsewhere, that are dreadfully strong to this purpose; thus he speaks to his Disciple *Timothy*, *The time*
- 2 Tim. 4. 4. 5. *will come, says he, when they will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lusts shall they heap to themselves, or according to the emphatical Signification of the Greek word, pile to themselves heaps of Teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.* In these last Ages we have seen but too much of these heaps or piles of Teachers, fond of Fables; and the Prediction hath been accomplished but too fully; for really, look which way one will upon the greatest part of the Prelates, alive at the time of the Reformation, and what with respect to their Morals, what to their Knowledge and Learning, and what to the discharge of their several Offices and Trusts, it may be said, without the least Injustice to their Persons, that if they fell from their Chairs, they sat so low before, that they had but a very easy fall of it.

Eng. Refl.
Pag. 110.

Object. 7. *But this is not all; after he hath shewn us in the Scripture this universal fall of all the Pastors, he must also find there, this Ministry of right returned to the private Persons that were never vested with it. And what is Mr. Claude's meaning? Is it that these private Persons became of right Ministers, without any bodies having ordained them; or that without being Ministers, they have right of their sole Authority to set up Ministers in the Church? Let them shew me it in the Scripture, or let them for ever renounce the pretence of having the Scripture alone for a Guide.*

Pag. 111.

I find in the Scripture, that Jesus Christ said to his Apostles, As my Father sent me, I also send you. I find in the Scripture, that the Apostles thus send others, and consecrate themselves Successors. But that all their Successors being on the sudden fallen, and deprived of the right of their Ministry, this Ministry should of right return to the Faithful, to whom none had ever given it, to dispose of at their Pleasure; neither hath the Scripture said, nor following Ages imagined: 'Tis then a Monster, the birth of which was reserved for the time of the new Reformation.

Ans.

Answ. M. de Meaux is still in pursuit of that Phantome of his, the universal Fall of the Pastors, the belief whereof he fixes upon me, as of a thing that had actually come to pass. He hath been told already, that this is a mistake; and I tell him over again once more, that my writing contains no such thing. To say, That *the Church sometimes takes away her Ministry from men that have palpably abused it, and that the Body of the Latin Prelates, who stood possess'd of the Ministry, and met at Trent, deserved to be lookt upon by our Fathers, as Ministers that had deprived themselves of their Ministry*; is not to affirm, that a universal fall happened to *all* the Pastors. There is nothing of Universality implied in these Expressions; the Ministers will never signify, *all the Ministers*; and the Body of the Prelates signifies the majority; but it does not signify *all to a Man*, without any Exception. M. de Meaux should not impose a meaning upon my words, which they do not contain, and which besides is expressly contrary to what I have said upon the same occasion elsewhere.

Neither ought he to suppose, as he does, that our Fathers at the time of their Separation from *Rome*, were merely private Persons; for this was never granted, and we think it will always be denied upon good grounds. In the first place, our Fathers were joined together in a Christian Society; and a Christian Society must not be lookt upon as mere private Persons, and no more. Besides, they had almost continually at the head of them, several Pastors, who had reformed and gathered them together, at least, as long as the Difficulty of the Times, and the Persecutions from their Enemies would admit of it. So that M. de Meaux hath no ground for calling them *private Persons*. I am very sensible, what it is he means by it; that out of the Communion of the Body of their Prelates, there is no lawful Society, and Men cannot be otherwise than scattered and dispers'd. But is it possible that in the *Romish* Communion men should be so strongly possess'd with the Notions of Numbers and Multitude, that all the rest must be reckoned for nothing? Shall not the concurrence of a very great many in the Justice of the same Cause, in the Purity of the same Faith, the same Hope, and the same Worship, in full agreement with the Word of God, pass for so considerable a band of Unity, as may warrant our saying, this makes a Church; when at the same time it is set in Opposition to a more numerous, and more powerful, but an unjust Party, that stands up against it? And if we be not the strongest side, must we therefore, if M. de Meaux be to give Sentence in the Cause, be lookt upon as wretched, dispers'd Creatures? Let him judg so in Gods Name, we cannot help it; but he will never gain us to his Opinion, so long as we know of what

Matth. 18.

20.

Matth. 5.

10.

1 Cor. I.

26, 27.

what price true Faith, Righteousness and Holiness, are in the sight of God. Jesus Christ did not promise when ye shall meet with the innumerable Body of the Clergy, rich with their fat Preferments, and gloriously drest in their Robes; but he promised, *When two or three are gathered together in my Name, there will I be in the midst of them.* He did not pronounce, Blessed are the strongest side, tho engaged in never so unjust a Cause; but he said, *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* St. Paul did not say, Ye see your calling, Brethren, how that it includes all that the World can call great, so many Arch-Bishops, and Bishops, and Abbots, and Primates, and so many Cardinals, and in the head of them all, a Pope; but he said, *Ye see your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.*

These two Observations thus premised, I come now to the Question M. de Meaux puts here, how I understand the Ministry to have of right returned to private Persons, who were never vested in it? I answer, My meaning is not, that the Ministry returns to private Persons; but my meaning is, that when some Pastors have run out into such vile Extravagancies, as forbid men to own them for their lawful Pastors any longer, then their Ministry returns of right to the Church; that is, not only to those other Pastors who have discharged their Duty faithfully; but to the faithful People that live under their Guidance also; in a word, to the whole Body of the Church together. Not that private Persons presently become Ministers upon this account, nor that the whole have any power immediately, and of themselves to exercise the Ministerial Function; but because the right of having Ministers, is a right that cannot be past away, belonging to the whole Body of the Church; and that next after God, the Church is the true and lawful Source from whence the Call to the Ministry must come. Thus it will be easy to apprehend in what manner the Ministry returns to her; for we shall find the case almost the same in the Religious Society, as in the Civil, where the Government is Democratical; for there the right of Magistracy naturally belongs, not to the Body of Magistrates only, but to the whole Commonwealth, provided they have not de vested themselves of that right, as all Countrys under a Monarchical Government have done. When therefore any Magistrates become Enemies, and destructive to the Society, by abusing the Offices and Trust reposed in them, the Offices themselves are not lost, but return of right to the Society which had conferred them upon these, and can bestow them upon other Persons.

sons. The Ministry can never dye in the Church, so long as the Church endures upon Earth. The Persons to whom she commits this Trust, may betray themselves unworthy of it, and for their abuses and faults deprive themselves of it; but they cannot utterly extinguish the thing it self, that returns back to its first Original.

If M. de Meaux would be at the trouble to consult my Book entituled, *The Defence of the Reformation*, Part 4. Ch. 3. where this subject is discours'd of copiously and fully, he would there meet, not only with a satisfactory solution to his Objection, but would see, into the bargain, the truth of our Principle substantially demonstrated by Arguments taken from Scripture, Reason, and the Fathers. He would there find the difference between the Apostles extraordinary Ministry, and that of ordinary Pastors, in that the former, being designed for the gathering together a Christian Church, and laying the first foundations of it firm, must of necessity be derived from Christ immediately; whereas the other, intended only for the preservation and propagation of that Church, must be derived from the Church it self. By this difference well weighed, he would perceive, that although Jesus Christ alone sent abroad his Apostles then, yet the ordinary Ministry may nevertheless belong to the Church; not merely, because it is *for the Church*, and no other Reason, for that may as well be made an Argument for the Apostles Ministry belonging to it too; but because it is part of the Goods put into her Possession, and imparted by her to Persons that exercise the several Functions belonging to it in her name. The consequence of all which is, that as it is she that confers it, so it is she, to whom it reverts, when treacherous and deceitful Persons are fallen from it.

Object. 8. *The Ministry, say they, belongs to the Church of right. It does without doubt belong to the Church, as the Eyes do to the Body. The Ministry is not for it self, no more are the Eyes. The Ministry is establish'd to be the Light of the Church, as the Eyes are the Light, or as Jesus Christ calls them, the Torch of the Body. Does it follow, that when the Body has lost its Eyes, it can remake them of it self? No, without doubt it will have need of the Hand which made them at first, and there will never be any thing but a new Creation, which can repair the Work that the first Creation had formed. In this manner, if the Catholick Church could, as they would imagine in the new Reformation, lose all on a sudden, all its Ministers, without their having given themselves Successors, according to the Order of Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ must come again on Earth, to re-establish this Sacred Order by a new Creation.*

Eng. Refl.
p. 111.

Ans.v.

Answ. To shew how little this Similitude of the Eyes, is to the purpose, we need only retort it back upon M. de Meaux himself. If the Church cannot make it self Ministers, because the Body cannot make it self Eyes; then Men who are already Ministers, cannot Ordain other Ministers, because Eyes cannot make other Eyes. There is obvious to every one that considers it, an essential difference between these two things, which hinders them from being aptly compared with one another in the case before us. For nature hath not appointed the use of the sight in a continual Succession of Eyes, as she hath fixed the Exercise of the Ministry in a continued Succession of Ministers. So that to make M. de Meaux's a good and pertinent Argument, the Persons of the first Ministers of the Christian Religion must have been contrived to endure as long as the Church, as the Eyes are designed to last as long as the Body. If God had made the Eyes by a constant and successive Motion, it is very probable this would have been effected by the whole Oeconomy of the Body being concerned in the disposal of it, rather than that the Eyes only should have that Power; because we see that the Blood, and the Spirits, and all that depends upon Succession in the Body, is formed that way. But there is no need of engaging our selves in these Philosophical Speculations; it is sufficient that M. de Meaux be told, that the very root and ground of the Vocation being inherent in the Body of the Church, in as much as the right of the Ministry belongs to her, and such a right as can never be lost; 'tis not, nor can in any wise be necessary that Jesus Christ should come again upon Earth to re-establish this Order by a new Creation.

Eng. Refl.
p. 112,
113.

Object. 9. Let us come to this interrupted State of the thirty first Article, which Mr. Claude undertakes to explicate to us. This interrupted State is alledged here, to found the necessity of an extraordinary Vocation in the pretended Reformers; for, let us hear how this Article speaks. It has been sometimes necessary, and namely in our days, in which the state of the Church was interrupted, that God should raise up People after an extraordinary manner to set up the Church anew. You see Gentlemen, this interrupted state of the Church is alledged only to found the extraordinary Vocation of your pretended Reformers. But to found the necessity of an extraordinary Vocation, 'tis not sufficient that the Ministry is impure, it must have ceased.

Answ. It is not necessary for the founding an extraordinary Vocation, that the Ministry should have absolutely ceased; it is enough, if we can say what the Article in our Confession expresses, That the State of the Church was interrupted. For as on one hand the Interruption of the State

State of the Church, does not imply, either that the Church was utterly extinct, nor that the Ministry hath quite ceased, but only that both of them have been extreamly corrupted, in respect of Doctrines, Worship, and Government, as well as in Manners; so likewise this extraordinary vocation, is not at all the creation of a new Ministry, so as to make a new Church, as M. de Meaux fancies it is; but we mean by it an extraordinary dispensation of God's good Providence, manifesting it self in the assistance he affords the Church, in order to her rescue out of so deplorable a Condition. This extraordinary good Providence was seen in proportioning and adapting the gifts and qualifications of the persons employed in effecting the Reformation, to that great and difficult work they undertook, and the exceeding great need the Church stood in of their assistance. The Ministry of the first Reformers was an ordinary Ministry, and so, more than enough, to justify their labouring for a Reformation. It had been conveyed down to them in a very impure way, but still it was conveyed down to them; and being so, made them to become persons in a publick capacity, and, as such, obliged them to endeavour the safety of the Church. Now if you consider the Reformation it self, it was a very extraordinary work, for Reformations are not things that happen every day; and they became sensible of the obligations they were under to attempt it, by two extraordinary things; to wit, by that measure of understanding, that holy zeal, and other graces, which God was pleased to impart to them in a more than usual proportion; and by that extream desolation to which they found the Church at that time reduced. When a Vessel at Sea is in mighty danger, and just upon being Shipwrackt, men must not stand upon an extraordinary vocation in the Pilot, as if that only could give him a right, or oblige him to lend his assistance; but they should consider that the present occasion and exigencies are extraordinary, and that his endeavours and service for preserving it, will be extraordinary too. In like manner, the Article of our Confession, wherein we say, *That it was necessary God should raise up people after an extraordinary manner, to set up the Church anew, the state whereof was interrupted*, does not relate to the right men had to labour after the Reformation; but the meaning of it is, that the condition the Church was in at that time being extraordinary, the attempts men ought to make for her deliverance, ought to have been proportionably extraordinary also, and consequently, that the gifts and abilities which God was pleased to honour them with, in order to the effecting this, were in like manner extraordinary. They that will give themselves the trouble of reading the Fourth Chapter of the Second Part, and the Fourth Chapter of the Fourth Part

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of the Defence of the Reformation, may there see this Head treated of at large.

Eng. Refl.
p. 113, 114.

Object. 10. To see, what an overthrow to Jesus Christ's Order Mr. Claude here introduces, we need only consider the Promises of Jesus Christ, and see in what it has pleased him principally to establish the strength of this Church. She is strong, she is invincible, because Jesus Christ has said, that Hell should not prevail against her: But he did not say that Hell should not prevail against her, till after he had said, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church; adding presently after, I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* 'Tis then in the Ministry, confessing and declaring Jesus Christ, and using the Authority of the Keys, that Jesus Christ hath principally established the strength of his Church.

Answer. Jesus Christ hath not established that strength of the Church, which must render her triumphant over the Gates of Hell, neither in the Believers, nor in their Ministers, but he hath fixed it in himself, and in the wonderful care and protection of his good Providence. Upon this account it is, that he says, not, *Thou shalt build, but I will build my Church; and, I am with you always even unto the end of the World.* As for the Believers, every days experience produces sad proofs of their weakness, and warns them, that they must not presume upon themselves for any thing. And for the Ministry, there are so many instances of its being brought into this wretched condition, that M. de Meaux must needs either have quite lost his memory, or he could not tell us what we saw just before in the Objection, and speak in good earnest all the while.

What was become pray of this strength of the Ministry, when both East and West were corrupted with *Arianism*, and some out of an ungodly Principle, some through the seducements of others that were so ungodly, some out of an easy compliance with other mens humours, some through ignorance, and some for fear and cowardice, threw the

† °
πολλὰ κίς
ἐδάκρυ-

Consubstantiality of the Son of God out of doors. † I have often, said Gregory Nazianzen, wept abundantly, to observe how this impiety spread it

κα, ὁρῶν ὅτι τότε χύσιν τὴ ἀπεθείας, καὶ τὴ νῦν ἐπανασταίνοντα διωγμὸν πρὸς ἑρβὴ λόγῳ, παρὰ τῶν
προσαπὼν τῷ λόγῳ. Τῷ ὅντι γὰρ ποιμενὲς ἠφρονέειτο, καὶ τὸ γαλαμίνον, καὶ ποιμενὲς πολλοὶ
διέφθικαν τὴ ἀμπελῶνά μιν. Ἦχονταν μερίδα ἐπιθυμητῶν, τὴ ἐκκλησίαν τῷ Θεῷ λέγων. πολλοῖς
ἰσραὴλ καὶ σφαρίοις σιωπηλεγεμῶν, τοῖς περὶ χρεῖστε καὶ μὴ χειρὸν, καὶ αὐτοῖς τοῖς μεγάλοις τῷ
Θεῷ περὶ ἡμῶν πάθεσι. πλὴν γὰρ ὀλίγων ἄγαν, καὶ τέτων ὅσοι διὰ σμικρότητα παρερείκη, ἢ δὲ
ἀρετῶν ἀνέστη, ὅς ἐστι σπέρμα καὶ ρίζαν ὑπολειφθῆναι πρὸς Ἰσραὴλ, ἵνα ἀνασταλῇ πάλιν, καὶ ἀνα-
είσῃ τῇ ἐπιρροίᾳ τῷ πνεύματι, πάντες τῷ καιρῷ γένησιν, τοσούτον ἀλλήλων διενεσχότες, ὅσον
πρὸς μὴ ἑαυτοῦ, πρὸς ὃ ὕστερον τὸ τοῦ πατρὸς; καὶ τὰς μὴ προαγανισαίς, καὶ προσάτας ἡμέρας τὴ ἀπε-
θείας, τὰς ὃ ταχύναι τὰ δάκρυα. Greg. Naz. Orat. 21. In Laud. Athanas. p. 387. Edit.
Paris. 1630.

self

self through all parts, and that those very persons whose duty and office it was to assert and vindicate the Word, were themselves turned persecutors of the sound Doctrine. For in truth, the Pastors have dealt foolishly, as the Scripture says; many Shepherds have laid waste my Vineyard, they spoiled it, and covered with reproach my pleasant portion; That is, the Church of God watered with the sweat and blood of so many Martyrs, before and since the coming of Jesus Christ, collected and consecrated by the sufferings of God himself, who died for our Salvation: Except some few of them, who either were disesteemed for their meanness, or who made opposition by their courage, (for it was necessary there should some remain untainted, to be, as it were, the seed and root, out of which Israel might bud out, and flourish again) all complied with the times. This only difference there was between them, that some were taken in the snare sooner, and others later; and some were the Ringleaders of impiety, while others followed and had the second place: * In this manner, says Cardinal Baronius, did Gregory bewail the wretched downfall of all the Eastern Church. But if to this we add the ruine, which at the same time was brought upon the whole Western Church, which I have already given a particular relation of, we shall be easily inclined to think, that the Christian World never saw a more perillous and disorderly time than this. For almost all the Pastors of the several Churches, were fallen into this precipice, and the Catholick Church never had so deformed and gasty an aspect.

* Hæc & alia de his Gregor. dum luger ingentem cladem ex eo Saranæ conventu universæ Orientali

Ecclesiæ illatam. Cui si quis addat ruinam illam superius recensitam, quam occidentalis Ecclesia passa est, facile judicabit, nullum unquam antea fuisse tempus, quo universus Christianus orbis magis fuerit conturbatus, Cunctis ferme pastoribus Ecclesiarum, paucis duntaxat exceptis, in præceps adactis; nec tetriorem unquam esse visam Ecclesiæ Catholicæ faciem. *Baron. Ann. ad Ann. 359. Edit. Antverp.*

Where was the strength of the Ministry, during all that time of Darkness and Ignorance in the ninth and tenth Century, that time that forced *Herivius* Bishop of *Rheims* to complain, that Christian Religion was just perishing, and stood as it were, upon the very brink of the Precipice. † There is scarce any degree, says he, or any order of Men in the Church,

† Omnis pene ordo,

omnisque status Ecclesiæ confusus ac temeratus est. Deniq; ne nobis parcere videamur, qui aliorum Errata corrigere debemus, Episcopi dicimur, sed Episcopale Officium non implemus. Ministerium prædicationis relinquimus, eos qui nobis commissi sunt videmus Deum deferere, & in pravis actibus jacere, & tacemus, nec eis manum correctionis tendimus. Sed, & si aliquando quædam dicere cæperimus, quæ carnalibus eorum animis valeant displicere, dicunt de nobis quod in Evangelio Dominus de sedentibus in Moysis Cathedra dixit, alligant onera gravia & importabilia, & imponunt in humeros hominum, digito autem suo nolunt ea movere, *Matt. 23.* Sicq; fit, ut nobis tacentibus, grex Domini pereat, & per abrupta vitiorum præceps actus, luporum immanium moribus pateat; dumq; deest, qui eos vitæ vias ingredi doceat, libere per devia gradiuntur erroris, & impletur in eis, quod per prophetam dicitur, *Isa. 5.*

Zelus apprehendit populum ineruditum; & alibi, Idcirco, inquit Captivus abiit populus meus, quia non habuit scientiam. Pensamus qui unquam per Ministerium linguæ nostræ de perverso opere conversi pœnitentiam egerunt; quis luxuriam nostrā prædicatione deseruit, quis avariciam, quis superbiam declinavit? *Conc. Troslei. Ann. Christi. 909. Labb. Collect. Tom. 9. Pag. 523. Edit. Lut. Paris 1671.*

but what is utterly confounded and corrupted; and lest we should seem over partial to our selves, who ought without favour or partiality to correct the faults of other Men, we go by the name of Bishops, but we have the Title only, the Office and Duty of a Bishop we do not discharge. The business of Preaching we lay utterly aside, we see the People committed to our charge forsake God, and drown themselves in Vice and Leudness; yet still we hold our Peace, and never stretch out a correcting hand to reclaim them. But if we sometimes take upon us to speak what may work some remorse, and make their carnal Spirits uneasy; they immediately apply to us, what our Lord in the Gospel said concerning the Scribes that sat in Moses Chairs: They bind heavy Burthens, and grievous to be born, and lay them on Mens shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. Thus we stand mute, and the Lords flock is lost by that means; overwhelming themselves with wickedness, they are exposed as a prey to the devouring Wolf, and having no Body to instruct them in the way of Life, easily lose themselves in the mazes and deserts of Error. Thus the saying of the Prophet is fulfilled in them; Jealousy shall overtake this ignorant People. And in another place; Therefore my People are gone into Captivity, because they have no knowledg, Isa. 5. 13. Let us recollect, if we can, who have by means of our Preaching been turned from their evil Works, and repented sincerely of them? What Man is there, that upon our Instructions and Exhortations, hath abandoned his Luxury, or left off his Avarice, or abated of his Pride?

Where was the strength of the Ministry to be found, when the Author of a Sermon inserted among St. Bernard's, addresses himself to the Clergy of his time in this manner? || *The Church of God is committed to your care, and you are called the Pastors; but ye are in truth, the Robbers and*

¶ Ecclesia
Dei vobis
commissa

est, & dicimini Pastores, cum sitis raptores. Et paucos habemus, heu! Pastores, multos autem excommunicatores. Et utinam sufficeret vobis lana & lac, sititis enim sanguinem. Quatuor tamen his qui præsunt in Ecclesia Dei necessaria esse præ omnibus reor; videlicet ut per ostium intrent, ut in humilitate se contineant, avaritiam declinent, munditiam tam corde quam corpore servare studeant. Sed quid prodest si canonice eligantur (quod est per ostium intrare) & non canonice vivant? Dixit dominus ad duodecim, nonne ego vos duodecim elegi, & unus ex vobis diabolus est? Fratres, sic facit Jesus hodie, eligens sibi multos Diabolos Episcopos. Ubi, proh dolor; reperiemus Episcopos, qui post adeptam dignitatem in humilitate se continent? Nempe superbia eis occasio est, ut ad tantam dignitatem aspirent, ut in ovile Christi impudenter irrumpant, cum tamen Dominus per Psalmistam dicat, non habitabit in medio domus mea qui facit superbiam. — Amant & faciunt superbiam, Parentes suos Extollentes, pauperes

Spoilers

antem negligentes, & deprimentes. Male vivunt, & subjectos male vivere volunt. Et idcirco comparantur Apostatae Angelo, qui dixit in corde suo, Ponam sedem meam ad Aquilonem. Quid est Diabolum ad Aquilonem sedem velle ponere, nisi superbum quempiam, & impium super suos similes a Charitatis calore, vel sapientiæ luce alienos, principatum appetere, vel adeptum tenere? Talis erat *Absalom* super filios Israel, patri rebellis & principatum appetens. Talis *Jeroboam*, qui peccavit, & peccare fecit filios Israel in vitulis aureis. Tales Scribæ & Pharisei, contra quos ait Dominus: Væ vobis Scribæ & Pharisei, qui clauditis regnum cælorum ante homines; vos enim non intratis, & introeuntes non finitis introire. Porro Episcopi hujus temporis avaritiam quomodo declinent? Quod enim sine miserabili gemitu dicendum non est, Christi opprobria, sputa, flagella, clavos, lanceam, crucem & mortem, hæc omnia in fornace avaritiæ conflant, & profligant in acquisitionem turpis quæstus, & pretium universitatis suis marsupiiis includere festinant; hoc solo sane a Juda Iscariotis differentes quod ille horum omne emolumentum denariorum numero compensavit, isti voraciore ingluvie lucrorum, infinitas exigunt pecunias. His insatiabili desiderio inhiant, pro his ne amittant timent, & cum amittunt, dolent. Harum in amore quiescunt. — Animarum nec casus reputatur, nec salus. — Cum sint de crucifixi patrimonio incrassati, impinguati, dilatati, non compatiuntur super contritione Joseph. Archipresbyter circuit obedientiam sibi creditam, & ut impleat saccum suum, tradit sanguinem justum. Vendit nempe homicidia, adulteria, incestus, fornicationes, sacrilegia, perjuriam, & usq; ad summum implet manticam suam. Fama igitur volante innotescit Episcopo talis quæstus, & accersito Archipresbytero, Da mihi inquit, partem meam. At ille, nihil dabo tibi: E contra Episcopus, si non dederis mihi, inquit, partem meam, auferam tibi omnia. Fitq; altercatio maxima, & propter avaritiam fit discordia. Postea vero Archipresbyter revolvens secum, quod auctoritate Episcopi fungatur potestate ista, & quod sine gratia ipsius nihil possit, perversè conversus, pœnitet, inquit, me, accipe partem tuam, & insuper de mea quod beneplacitum fuerit & reconcilientur. Heu! sicut Herodes & Pilatus reconciliati sunt, & Christus crucifixus est; sic nihilo minus isti reconcilientur, & pauperes Christi spoliati sunt. — Væ generationi huic a fermento Phariseorum, quod est hypocrisis, si tamen hypocrisis dici debet, quæ jam latere præ abundantia non valet, & præ impudentia non quærit. Et sic serpi hodie putrida tabes per omne corpus Ecclesiæ, eo desperatius, eoq; periculosius quo intestinus. Nam si assurgeret apertus Hæreticus, mitteretur foras, & aresceret; si violentus inimicus, absconderet se quis forsan ab eo. Nunc quomodo ejiciet, aut quomodo absconderet se? Omnes amici & inimici; omnes necessarii, omnes domestici, & nulli pacifici; Ministri Christi sunt, & serviunt Antichristo; honorati incedunt de bonis domini, cui honorem non deserunt: Unde hinc est eis quem quotidie videmus meretricius nitor, histrionicus habitus, regius apparatus. Inde aurum in frænis, aurum in sellis, & calcaribus. Plus nitent calcaria quam altaria. Inde mensæ splendide & cibis & scyphis; Inde comestationes, & ebrietates. Inde Cythara & Lyra & tibia, redundantia torcularia, & promptuaria plena. — Hujusmodi sunt & volunt esse Ecclesiarum Præpositi, Decani, Episcopi & Archiepiscopi. *Serm. ad Clerum in Concil. Rhemenfi Congregatum. vide Bernard. Op. Edit. Paris, 1572. Fol. 403.*

Spoilers of it; for we have very few that feed the Flock; alas! but a great many that Excommunicate them. I wish to God, you would but be satisfied with the Milk, and the Wooll, but ye thirst after the very Blood of the Sheep. There are, as I take it, four things chiefly required in those that are Governors over the House of God; that they enter in by the Door, that they keep themselves within the bounds of Humility, that they avoid Covetousness, and that they preserve themselves pure and undefiled, both in Body and Spirit. Now, what signifies it for them;

them to enter in by the Door, that is, to be canonically elected, unless they lead canonical Lives too? Jesus Christ (we read) said to his Disciples, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil? — My Brethren, Jesus Christ observes the same method still, he chuses many Bishops that are Devils. Where, alas! shall we meet with any Bishops, who after their Promotion, keep themselves within the Bounds of Humility? Pride is the very thing that puts them upon seeking this Dignity, and makes them impudently intrude into the Lords Sheepfold, when yet the Lord says by his Prophet, He that is of a proud heart, shall not dwell in my house, Ps. 101. — They are haughty and insolent, they prefer their Relations, and set them on high, but the Poor they utterly neglect. They lead ill Lives themselves, and are desirous that all under their Government should lead as bad as they; in this they resemble the Apostate Angel, who said in his heart, I will sit in the sides of the North, Isa. 14. 13. What is the meaning of the Devils sitting in the sides of the North; but a proud, ungodly desire of ruling, and domineering over his equals, over those that like him, have neither the light of Wisdom nor the warmth of Charity. Such a one was Absalom, who desired to reign over the Children of Israel. Such was Jeroboam, who both sinned himself, and made Israel to sin. Such were the Scribes and Pharisees, against whom our Saviour denounced a Curse; Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, for ye shut the kingdom of Heaven against men: ye enter not in your selves, and those that would enter in, ye hinder, Matt. 23. If now we come to consider the avarice of our modern Bishops, that is not to be mentioned without a deep sorrow and real concern. They raise to themselves a dishonest gain from the scandal of Christ, and the ignominy he endured; his Spitings, his Scourges, his Nails, his Spear, his Cross, and his Death. They greedily sweep into their own Purses the price that was paid for the redemption of the World; and the difference between them and Judas is only this, that Judas sold all this for a few pence, but these sordid and insatiable wretches make vast sums of it. — All their care is to heap up riches, all their fear is, that these should be lost, and the loss of them is the only thing that can affect them with sorrow. As for the Souls of men, let them be saved, or damned, they trouble not themselves about either; but grow fat, and big, and swell to a prodigious bulk with the patrimony of the Crucified Jesus, and never lament for the breaches of Joseph. The Archpriest makes his Circular Visitation, as enjoyned, and that he may fill his own Bags, he betrays innocent blood; he sells and commutes for Murders, for Incests, for Fornications, Sacriledg and Perjury, and this course he takes to cram his Chests to the very lid. The Bishop, having intelligence of this, sends for his Arch-priest, and demands his share of the Money. The Arch-priest denies to give him any. The Bishop threatens then to take it all. Hence arises a hot dispute, and difference between them. The Arch-priest, considering at last, that his Office is executed by an Authority derived from the Bishop, and depends upon his

his favour, finds it necessary to maintain a good Correspondence, and therefore repents, and entreats him, not only to take his proportion, but what he pleased more should be at his service. Thus they come to a reconciliation. And thus alas! Herod and Pilate were reconciled, they Crucified Jesus upon it, and these fleece his poor members upon theirs. — Wo to this Generation, because of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy; if yet a Man ought to call that Hypocrisy, which is so rife, that it cannot; and so shameless, that it does not desire to be hid. Thus the Corruption gains ground daily, and spreads over the whole Body of the Church, so much the more pernicious and desperate, as it advances nearer to the vitals, and is more inward and unseen. If a Heretick openly declare himself, he is presently thrust from our Communion, and like the rotten branch, cast out, and withers away; or if an enemy make any publick opposition, men might hide themselves from him; but in this case such remedies cannot be used; all pretend to be friends, and yet are enemies; all dwell like the same family together, and all are at war with each other; they seem Ministers of Christ, and yet serve Antichrist; they are honoured with the Goods and possessions of that Lord, whom they in their practices continually dishonour. Hence proceeds that affected trimness of the Harlot, that gay dress of the Player, that state of a Prince. Hence their gold Bridles, embroidered Saddles, and glittering Spurs, for their very Spurs are richer and more magnificent than their Altars. Hence their full Tables, their Cupboards of Plate, their noble Entertainments, their Musick and Collations, their Presses running over with Wine, and their Granaries full of Corn. Such are nowadays, our Ecclesiastical Governors, our Deans, Bishops, and Archbishops, and this is the figure they delight to make.

What I pray was become of this strength of the Ministry, when Alvarez Pelagius gave the following Description of the Church in his time? *Lam. 5.2.*

* Our Inheritance is turned to Strangers; that is, our Inheritance of Inno-

* Innocentia hære-

ditas & virtutum versa est ad alienos, id est Laicos, respectu Clericorum ab Ecclesia alienos, qui hodie communiter innocentiores, & virtuosiores sunt Clericis. Hodie enim vere quasi sancti sunt Laici respectu Clericorum. Et in dei Judicio surgent Laici cum generatione ista Clericorum & Religiosorum; & condemnabunt eos comparatione vitæ, — sicut exponit Hieron. *Matt. 12.* de Ninivitis & Regina Saba Condemnantibus Judæos in die Judicii. *Domus nostra ad extraneos.* Ecclesiæ factæ sunt habitatio incredulorum, a fide Extraneorum. *Pupilli facti sumus absq; patre,* quia vere Prælati Ecclesiæ patres vocantur, sed vere communiter in effectu patres non sunt, quod inutiles sunt; & non refert vel prælatum non habere, vel inutilem, vel malum. Non omnes Episcopi sunt Episcopi, multi sacerdotes, & pauci sacerdotes. Jam non secundus sed nullus est. Et qui inhabilis est ad agendum, nullus. Quomodo enim vocantur Patres, qui nec sua peccata detergunt, nec filiorum crimen corrigant? Tales magis canes impudici, quam patres & Episcopi appellandi. Quum & parentes filiis thesauros thesaurizare debeant, quomodo parentes sunt prælati, qui tota die suos excoriant subditos? Indurantur enim prælati parentes ad filios subditos. *Mater nostra,* &c. Mater Ecclesia quasi vidua est, filiis in peccato mortuis viduata, & quod quasi vidua malos prælatos habens. Alvarez, Pelagius de Planctu Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 2. Edit. Venet. 1569.

cence

cence and Virtue, is past to the Laity, who in comparison of the Clergy are but as Strangers to the Church, and they are commonly now-a-days more Innocent and Virtuous than the Clergy. For the rest are perfect Saints in comparison of some Ecclesiasticks. They shall rise in Judgment against the Clergy, and Religious Orders of this Generation, and shall condemn them, by the comparing of their lives together, as Jesus Christ told the Jews, the Ninivites and Queen of Sheba should do by them. Ibid. Vers. 2. Our Houses to aliens; that is, our Churches are become the Habitation of Infidels, and such as are strangers to the Faith. Vers. 3. We are Orphans and Fatherless. Our Prelates, who are indeed stiled the Fathers of the Church, yet are not really, and indeed Fathers. They are useless and unprofitable men; and to have wicked, and unprofitable Prelates, is the same thing, as if we had none at all. All are not Bishops, that have the title of Bishops. There are many Priests, and yet there are but few; we can not now say one or two, but not any at all; for whosoever is incapable, or unactive in his station, does not deserve to be reckoned for any at all. How shall we call those men our Fathers, who take no care either to amend themselves, or correct their Children? These deserve the opprobrious name of shameless Dogs, better than that honourable one of Bishops. Fathers, the Scripture says, ought to lay up for their Children; but instead of that, the Prelates daily strip, and flea their Subjects, and harden themselves against them, as if they were Subjects, and slaves, and not Children. Vers. 3. Our Mother the Church, is a Widow and Childless, for her Children are dead in Sin, and having no Husbands but wicked Prelates, it is all one as if she had none, and so a Widow.

Where was this strength of the Ministry, when *Æneas Silvius* wrote thus to one of his Friends, upon occasion of the Confusions and differences between the Council of Basil, and Pope *Eugenius* :. I think Charles the French King hath shewn an easy and sure way of quieting this Evil, which is, to contrive a meeting of the Princes, or their Deputies, in some convenient place, and that all should stick to what they shall resolve upon. To effect this, all the Kings must be written to, and all the Princes, and desired to

∴ Viam
fopiendi
hoc ma-
lum Caro-
lus Rex
Franciæ
nisi fallor

& tutam, & brevem ostendit, ut fiat conventus Principum, vel eorum Oratorum, in communi aliquo loco, ibiq; una recipiatur Conclusio per omnes. Ad hoc autem peragendum opus esset rursus scribere cunctis Regibus, principibusq; ut Oratores suos Argentinum vel Constantiam initterent, pleno mandato suffultos, ad pacem Ecclesiæ pertractandam. Fienda esset rursus expensæ.— Paulo plus Constantinus in Congregatione Niceni Concilii exposuit. Hæc via non possit impediri, nec Papa vel Concilium reniti possent, tanquam hoc absq; ipsis fieri nequiret. Licet enim principibus secularibus convenire invito Clero, & tamen illic unio fieri posset. Nam ille Papa indubitatus esset, cui omnes principes obedirent. Non video Clericos, qui velint pro ista vel illa parte martyrium ferre. Omnes hanc fidem habemus, quam nostri principes, qui si colerent idola, & nos etiam coleremus. Et non solum Papam, sed Christum etiam negaremus seculari potestate urgente. Quia refriguit Charitas, & omnis interiit fides; utcunque sit, pacem desideravimus, quæ sive per aliud Concilium, sive per conventum principum detur, nihili pendo. *Æneas Silv. Epist. Lib. 1. Epist. 54. Pag. 539. Edit. Basil.*

send

send their Representatives to Stratsburg, or Constance, with full power and instructions to treat of whatever shall concern the peace of the Church. This will draw some expence upon him—but Constantine was at more for convening the Council of Nice. This is an easy expedient, and cannot be opposed, either by the Pope or Council, upon pretence such a thing is not to be done without them; for Princes may meet, whether the Clergy agree to it or no; and what person soever the Princes consent to own for Pope, will be Pope without dispute. I do not find any of the Clergy inclinable to suffer Martyrdom for either side of the Cause. We are just of our Princes Religion, if they worship Idols, we should do so for company, and not only deny the Pope, but renounce Jesus Christ himself, if the secular Powers urged us to it. Charity is cold, and all Faith perfectly dead; give us but peace, and we care not from what hand it comes, whether a Council, or an Assembly of temporal Princes convey it to us.

What strength had the Ministry left, when a good honest Bishop, that lived in the beginning of the Reformation, drew the Clergy of that Age, in such Colours as these? * Jesus Christ made the Ecclesiasticks fishers of men, but in these times they fish not for men, but for honours and preferments. Upon which account Catherina Senensis says of the Clergy of this Age, "That they are unhappy men, addicted to their worldly interests, blinded for, and with their sins, Lovers of themselves, but utterly without any concern or affection for God and their neighbour; They are grown worse than the Laity, whom they draw along into the same snare of perdition. They suck out all the Milk and Blood of the Church, converting upon themselves all that tenderness they ought to have for her. They get out of her the Benefices, the Pensions, the Revenues, and all that; and these they lay upon their pleasures, and their sins, without taking any manner of care for the Salvation of her Mem-

* Christus fecit piscatores hominum; sacerdotes autem hodie non piscantur homines, sed honores, unde in Catherina Senensi se-

quitur. *Moderni & infelices Clerici temporalibus incumbentes ob eorum malitiam luce divina privati, seipsos amant, Dei & proximi dilectionem negligunt, deteriores sunt secularibus, quos una secum perdunt; sanguinem & lac sugunt ex medulla Ecclesie, ut ipsa palleat; affectum nempe Charitatis, qua Ecclesiam afficere deberent, ad semetipsos retorquent.* Ab ea enim eliciunt beneficia, pensiones, census, & cætera; deliciis & flagitiis dediti, salutem & curam membrorum Ecclesie, id est, animarum Christi fidelium negligunt. Ob ejusmodi reproborum Clericorum vitam sæculares veniunt ad inobedientiam & irreverentiam Ecclesie. Quinimo seducuntur a cæcis ducibus, qui, pro pudor! sunt ignavi idiotæ, præsumptuosi, hypocritæ, avari, simoniaci, luxuriosi, invidi, tardi ad bona opera, proni ad mala, post temporalia currentes; deberent esse lapides, sed dicuntur dispersi lapides sanctuarii. — In conviviis, tabernis, ludis, & theatris ubique vagantes crebrius reperiuntur, quam in locis Deo dicatis. Quam perniciofa autem & impertinens sit universali Ecclesie Clericorum scurrilitas, ignorantia, fornicatio, simonia, aliaque crimina, (quibus totus pene clerus est infectus) nemo ambigit. *Onus Ecclesie, Cap. 23. Edit. Anno. 1620.* This Book was written in the year 1519. two years after Luther began to oppose the Papal Indulgences, and printed first in the year 1531.

bers, the Souls of the Faithful that belong to Jesus Christ. By reason of this scandalous behaviour in the Clergy, the Laity throw off all obedience and respect for the Church; or rather, they are indeed seduced, and enticed to sin with those blind Guides, that are, to their shame be it spoken, ignorant, presumptuous, hypocritical, covetous, simoniacal, luxurious, envious fellows, backward to all good, and always ready to commit evil; Thus, while they run up and down at this rate after the things of this World, they are not, as they ought to be, the Corner-stones, but the dispersed and scattered rubbish of the Sanctuary — You shall find them at Feasts, in Taverns, at Plays, and in places of publick Entertainment, and running from one of these to the other, through every street in the Town, more frequently than in the places devoted to God's Worship and Service. In a word, No body can think otherwise, but that this scandalous lewd Conversation, this Ignorance, Fornication, Simony, and other Vices (with which the Clergy are almost universally tainted) is very disadvantageous, and destructive to the whole Church.

† Navicula Petri certe quidem in nullo unquam graviore visa est versari discrimine nec manifestiori pereundi

Where, I beseech you, shall we find that strength of the Ministry, upon which M. de Meaux pretends, that Jesus Christ hath founded his Church, in those times, which extorted even from Baronius himself the following Complaints? † St. Peter's little Ship was certainly never in such evident danger, nor so near being cast away, as when tost with the storms that rose against her in this (he means the Tenth) Age. Whatever she had formerly endured under Heathen Emperors, whatever inconveniencies the Hereticks, Schismaticks, and all other Persecutors brought upon her, was but child's play, compared to what she now underwent. Those former sufferings were her gain and advantage, and the mighty victories she obtained over wickedness, and cruelty, were so many fresh additions to her beauty, greatness, and honour. But you will say, what could these evils be, and whence could this horrible tempest arise? They

penitus constituta periculo, quam cum ingruentibus sæculo isto est iactata procellis: nam cuncta quæ olim passa est sub Gentilibus Imperatoribus, vel quæ ab Hæreticis sive Schismaticis, aliisve quibuscunq; Persecutoribus, horum comparatione sunt æstimanda lusus quodammodo puerorum, imo referenda in lucrum, & computanda in certum emolumentum, cum ex illis ipsa Ecclesia effecta sit pulchrior, aucta amplior, atq; reddita gloriosior, dum egregium semper revexerit de impietate prostrata triumphum. At quænam mala ista dices, & unde tanta omnium acerbissima tempestas exorta? Est plane, ut vix aliquis credat, imo nec vix quidem sit crediturus, nisi suis inspicat ipse oculis, manibusque contrectet, quam indigna, quamq; turpia atq; deformia, execranda insuper, & abominanda, sit coacta pati sacrosancta Apostolica sedes, in cuius Cardine universa Ecclesia Catholica vertitur; cum principes sæculi huius quantumlibet Christiani, hac tamen ex parte dicendi Tyranni sævissimi, arrogaverunt sibi tyrannice electionem Romanorum Pontificum. Quot tunc ab eis, proh pudor! proh dolor! in eandem sedem, Angelis reverendam, visu horrenda intrusa sunt monstra? Quot ex eis oborta sunt mala, consummataæ tragædiæ? Quibus tunc ipsam sine macula & ruga contigit aspergi sordibus, putoribus infici, inquinari spuritiis, ex hisq; perpetua infamia denigrari? Baron. ad Ann. 900. Ant.

are such as will scarcely be credited, nay could never be believed, unless a man had almost the evidence of sense to convince him; except he did, if I may so say, see, and feel the unworthy, vile, dirty, horrible, cursed, abominable things that were put upon the Apostolick See; that See which is as it were the hinge upon which the whole Church hangs and turns. When the Princes of this Age, Christians 'tis true, but in this respect most barbarous Tyrants, arrogated to themselves a power to abuse the Pope of Rome, what monsters of men, alas, were then thrust into that Holy Chair, which even Angels reverence! What horrid Crimes did they commit? What Tragical Spectacles did they shew the world? With what filth, pollution and villany was that Spouse besmeared, and with what eternal infamy blackned, who is without wrinkle, or without spot?

Where, pray, was the strength of this Stone in those times, when Arnulph Bishop of Orleans delivered himself thus, in a Council held at Rheims, in the year 992. * What have we not seen in our days? We have seen one John, whose name was Octavian, a man debauched with all manner of Vice and wickedness, who conspired against Otho, whom he had formerly Crown'd Emperor himself. This man was forced to flee, and one Leo Neophytus was put in his place. But no sooner was Otho gone from Rome, but Octavian returns, expells Leo, cuts off the Nose, Hands, and Tongue of John the Cardinal-Deacon, and fills the whole City with the blood of people of quality. Presently after he died, and a Deacon, one Benedict, was set up to succeed him. Leo returns with the Emperor, attacks this Benedict, besieges, takes, and deposes him, and banishes him for ever into Germany. Another Otho succeeds in the Empire, who for Arms, Policy, and Wisdom, was the greatest Prince in the world: And a horrid Monster, one Boniface, succeeded in the Popedom, who was as much the greatest man in the world for wickedness and villany; and had a hand in his Predecessors death. He was also expelled and condemned in a full Synod, but after Otho's death returned to Rome, thrust out Peter, an Apostolick man, who was then in the Papal Chair, deposed him, and after long imprisonment, brought him to a miserable death. And can we suppose now, that

* Quid sub hæc tempora non vidimus? Vidimus Joannem cognomento Octavianum in volubro libidinum, etiam contra eum Ottonem, quem Augustum creaverat, conjurasse; quo fugato, Leo Neophytus

in Pontificem creatur; sed Ottone Cæsare Roma discedente, Octavianus Romam redit, Leonem fugat, Joannem diaconum, naso, dextrisq; digitis, ac lingua mutilat, multaq; cæde primorum in urbe debacchatus, in brevi moritur. Cui Benedictum diaconum, cognomento Grammaticum Romani substituant. Eum quoq; Leo Neophytus cum suo Cæsare non multo post aggreditur, obsidet, capit, deponit, perpetuoq; exilio in Germaniam dirigit.

Succedit Ottoni Cæsari *Cæsar Otto*, natura, ætate, cunctos principes armis, consilio & scientia superans. Succedit Romæ in Pontificatu horrendum monstrum *Malefacius* cunctos mortales nequitia superans, etiam prioris Pontificis sanguine cruentus. Sed hic etiam fugatus & in magna Synodo damnatus est. Post obitum divi Ottonis Romam redit, insignem virum Apostolicum Petrum, Papiensis Ecclesiæ prius Antistitem, data Sacramentorum fide, ab arce Urbis dejicit, deponit, squalore carceris affectum perimit. Num talibus monstris hominum ignominia plenis, scientia humanarum & divinarum rerum vacuis, innumeros sacerdotes Dei per orbem terrarum scientiæ & vitæ merito conspicuos subjici decretum est? *Baron.* ad Ann. 992.

an infinite company of God's Ministers, dispers'd over the whole Earth, and eminent both for Learning and Holiness of Life, were ever designed to be subject to such fellows as these, so scandalous for their corrupt conversations, and for their abominable ignorance in all things both Divine and Humane?

What strength had this Stone left, when the disorders in the Church grew to such a height, as forced Adrian the Sixth to that ingenuous Confession in the Diet at Nuremberg, an account whereof we meet with in Rainaldus, * *We ingenuously acknowledg, says he, that God hath suffered this Persecution and Confusion to happen upon the Church, because of the Sins of Men; especially, of the Priests and Prelates. It is sure, the Lords hand is not shortned, that it cannot save; but our iniquities have separated between us and him; and made him hide his face from us, that he will not hear. The Scriptures cry aloud, that the sins of the people proceed from the miscarriages of the Priests, Isa. 9. 1, 2. and for this reason as St. Chrysostom says, Our Lord when he went about to heal Jerusalem that was sick, entred first of all into the Temple, to drive out from thence the Priests sins; acting herein like a good Physician, that begins at the very root of the disease. We are sensible, that for some years since, some abominations have been committed even in this holy See, many abuses in spiritual things, many transgressions of the Commandments, and that all things have been turned to the worse. 'Tis no wonder therefore, that the infirmity should be passed from the head to the members, from the Popes to the inferior Prelates. We all of us, both Prelates and subordinate Clergy, have*

* Item
dices nos
ingenue
fateri,
quod Deus
hanc per-
secutio-
nem Ec-
clesiæ suæ
inferri per-
mittit,
propter
peccata
hominum,
maxime
sacerdo-
tum, &
Ecclesiæ
prælato-
rum.

Certum enim est, non esse abbreviatam manum Domini, ut salvare nequeat, sed peccata dividere inter nos & ipsum, & abscondere faciem suam a nobis, ut non exaudiat. Clamant Scripturæ, peccata populi derivari a peccatis sacerdotum; proptereaque ut ait Chrysostomus, salvator noster curaturus infirmam civitatem Jerusalem, ingressus est prius templum, ut peccata sacerdotum primo castigarer; instar boni medici, qui morbum a radice curat. Scimus in hac sancta sede aliquot jam annis multa abominanda fuisse, abusus in spiritualibus, excessus in mandatis, & omnia denique in perversum mutata. — Nec mirum si ægritudo a capite in membra, a summis Pontificibus in inferiores prælatos descenderit. Omnes nos (id est, prælati) & Ecclesiastici declinavimus unusquisque in vias suas, nec fuit jamdiu qui faceret bonum, non fuit usque ad unum. Quamobrem necesse est, ut omnes demus gloriam Deo, & humiliemus animas nostras ei, videaturque unusquisque nostrum unde ceciderit, & se potius quilibet judicet, quam a Deo in virga furoris judicari velit. Qua in re, quod ad nos attinet, polliceberis nos omnem operam adhibebimus, ut primum Curia hæc, unde forte omne hoc malum processerit, reformetur; ut sicut inde Corruptio in omnes inferiores emanavit, ita etiam ab eadem sanitas & reformatio omnium emanet. Ad quod procurandum nos tanto arctius obligatos reputamus, quanto universum mundum hujusmodi reformationem avidius desiderare videmus. Rainald. Annal. Tom. 20. Edit. Romæ 1663. in *Adrian. 6. ad Ann. 1522. Parag. 70.* These are part of the Instructions given by the Pope to Francesco Chiericato, Bishop of Fabriano, and Nuncio to the Diet; and because Rainaldus may not be easily met with, the Reader would not do amiss, to see the account Father Paul gives of this in his first Book of the History of the Council of Trent, which agrees so exactly with Rainaldus, that I have transcribed most part of this quotation, out of Mr. Brent's Translation, Page 25, 26.

gone aside every one to his own ways; in so much, that for some time, there hath been none that hath done good, no not one. We ought to give this Glory to God, and humble our Souls before him. Therefore let every one of us consider from whence he is fallen, and each Man judge himself, not expecting till God judge and visit us with the rod of his fury. We, for our own part, promise to employ all our wit, and use all diligence, that the Court of Rome, from whence, peradventure, all this mischief proceeded, should be Reformed first of all: that so, as from her the Corruption was derived down to other parts below, so Health and Reformation may likewise come down from her upon all. Which we the rather think our selves obliged to do, because we see that all the World doth earnestly desire such a Reformation.

But what ground then hath M. de Meaux for this pretended strength of the Ministry, and the Court of Rome? This he hath; That it is observable, Jesus Christ did not promise that Hell should not prevail against the Church, till he first had said, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church*: And that, immediately after he adds, *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*. He hath this ground likewise, That Jesus Christ did not say, *I am with you always, even unto the end of the World*; but only to those whom he before empowered with this Commission, *Teach and Baptise*; whereunto he adds a passage out of St. Cyprian, the substance whereof is, *That the Church is the people united with their Bishop, and the Flock joyn'd to their Pastor*.

Eng. Refl.
page 114.

M. de Meaux must repose a mighty confidence in the strength of his own Observations, to think they ought to weigh more than plain experimental proofs, which he is sufficiently acquainted with, and knows we are not ignorant of our selves. What? Because Jesus Christ speaks of his Church, and represents it to us under the notion of a building, we must presently look upon the antecedent and subsequent parts of that discourse, to be like the two walls which support the House in the middle. 'Tis a pretty conceit, I confess, but he must pardon me, if I tell him, 'tis not very conclusive in a Dispute, nor hath Argument enough to prevail upon us to forego matters of fact to the contrary. Jesus Christ might have promised, that he would build his Church upon this Rock, That is, upon this Confession made by St. Peter just before, as most of the Fathers have interpreted it. He might have promised to give him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, That is, that he would make use of him as an instrument to begin the Preaching of the Gospel, and the Conversion of the People; he might, I say, have promised these things, and yet neither the one, nor the other of these two clauses have any necessary connexion with that in the middle, which is his promise of Victory over Hell, by such a mutual Relation as M. de Meaux endeavours

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vours to give them. This first Argument then is a little too weak and slender to establish that assertion, viz. That Jesus Christ hath placed the Churches strength chiefly in the Ministry.

Matth. 28.
19, 20.

The second hath not much more substance in it neither; Jesus Christ said to his Disciples, *Go, teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;* Therefore he hath placed the Churches strength chiefly in the Ministry. This Consequence is forced and unnatural, and there is a great deal more reason to infer from hence, that he hath on the contrary placed the strength of the Ministry in the Church. *Teach, and baptize the nations, appointing them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you,* this does primarily respect the personal Ministry of the Apostles themselves, and signifies that Collection they were to make of the Christian Church. *I am with you unto the end of the world,* this principally regards the Body of the Christian Church, already gathered together by the Apostles, as is evident from those words, *To the end of the world;* and thus Jesus Christ himself hath explained his own meaning in the Seventeenth of St. John, *Neither pray I for these alone,* says he, *but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.* Jesus Christ gives his Apostles a charge to collect the Church, and then he promises that Church, to continue with it even unto the end of the World.

Joh. 17. 20.

But may some object, *This Church thus assembled must have an ordinary settled Ministry.* Yes, it must so. *Then he promises to preserve this Ministry uninterrupted to the end of the World.* I answer, He promises to preserve the right of it inviolate to his Church, so that it shall never be taken away from her. Let us say, if you will, that he promises to maintain her in the constant Possession of it. *There will always be a Church then, with which Jesus Christ will be, with which he will teach, with which he will baptize without Interruption, even unto the end of World.* Right, there will so. *Then the Succession and Perpetuity of the Ministry, is included in this promise.* I acknowledg all that too. *It is then in the Ministry chiefly, that Jesus Christ fixes the strength, and everlasting continuance of his Church.* This is what I deny, and M. de Meaux will not be able to prove, Jesus Christ preserves his Church, and for the sake of his Church he preserves the Ministry; but that he does not likewise preserve the Ministry by his Church, that is, by that right of Vocation, which is originally in the Body of his Faithful, and by the use which this Body of his Faithful shall make of such right, is what neither is, nor can be inferred from Jesus Christs words.

M. de

M. de Meaux is too far prepossess'd with his own private Notions, and that hinders him from discerning, where the difficulty of the Point in Controversy lies. The Church, and the Ministry, are two things join'd together, we own it. But he would persuade us, that the Church depends upon the Ministry, as a Rivulet does upon its Spring; and we on the contrary are of Opinion, that the ordinary Ministry depends upon the Church, as an effect depends upon its productive Cause. We can easily conceive the extraordinary Ministry of Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, as the Source and Fountain from whence the Christian Church is derived; but since the time of the Church's being established, we conceive her as vested with a right of the ordinary Ministry; and consequently, as having within her self the Root and Principle of the Vocation thereunto. And because Infallibility stoop'd at the Apostles, and the ordinary Ministers may be elected out of worldly Men and Hypocrites, that are Members of the exterior Profession; we look upon their Ministry to be liable to very grievous Corruptions, and consequently, to mighty Changes and Revolutions. But yet we think it perpetual too for all that, by virtue of Jesus Christ's Promises, and that upon these three accounts. First, because the Church must subsist always, and therefore this right or root of the Ministry, must always continue in her too, because it is such a right, as can never be lost. Secondly, because Almighty God by his Providence does stop and moderate the Torrent of Corruption, so far as he sees fit; he prescribes bounds to it, and prevents its proceeding to such a degree, as would quite extinguish the Ministry, and this in the very hands of the men in Possession of it; so we think he did before the Reformation. Thirdly, because even then, when he suffers the Corruption to prevail so far, that men deprive themselves, by their extravagances, of the Ministry committed to them, he does still stir up some, even among these in Possession, that shall discharge their Duty, and be that residue mentioned by *Gregory Nazianzene*, in the Passage cited out of him before. This is the Point *M. de Meaux* should have appli'd himself to, this he ought to dispute against, or at least establish the contrary by Arguments that have some Life in them, and not insist upon pitiful little Observations, which will never do him any Credit.

But should he once have come to engage in this undertaking, he would quickly have found it harder to compass, than he thinks for; because indeed all our Principles are founded upon unquestionable Truths. That the ordinary Ministry is the Churches, and depends upon the Church, is what Reason, Scripture, and the Fathers teach us, as I have made appear sufficiently in the Defence of the Reformation. That Infallibility

fallibility ceased with the Apostles, is what I have likewise proved in the same Book. That the Ministry may be committed to worldly Men and Hypocrites, is what Experience does but too evidently shew. That the Ministry, that is, the body or the major Part of the Clergy, are liable to be extremely corrupted, as well in matters of Doctrine, Worship and Discipline, as in regard of Morals, is what we are forced to acknowledge, whether we will or no; unless we will wink hard, and see nothing of all that Story concerning the *Arrian* Heresy, that, concerning the debates about Images, and upon several other Occasions. That God by his Almighty Providence, puts a stop to the growth of Corruption, and prevents its getting such a Head as should utterly destroy and stifle the Ministry, even in the very hands of those Men that are actually possessors of it, and abuse it, is, what the Instances of the Priests and Levites, before Christs coming into the World; of the Pharisees and Scribes, at the time of his being in the World, and of the Bishops that fell into the *Arrian* Heresy, do all abundantly prove. Lastly, That when the Body, the generality fall into Sin and Error, Gods does yet, even then, raise up some among the ordinary Ministers to discharge their Duty, is likewise evidently demonstrated by the Examples of *St. Athanasius*, *St. Hilary*, and some few more, who boldly and bravely resisted the Majority of their Brethren, and without ever regarding their being branded with the name of Hereticks, and persecuted as men that had cut themselves off from all the World besides; yet separated for all that, and fixed their Eyes upon nothing but God, and his Truth.

Psal. 121.

If *M. de Meaux* please but to enquire diligently into these things, he will find that God hath not placed the strength of his Church, neither in the Church it self, nor in its Ministry, but in the constant watchful care of his own Providence, for *he is the keeper of Israel, that never slumbers nor sleeps.* I confess indeed, The Ministers are by the Institution and Design of their Office, called to keep the Church; they are her Watchmen and Shepherds; and when they faithfully discharge the Trust reposed in them, the Station they are in, makes them become very powerful Instruments for the Preservation of the Flock. But it sometimes falls out, that they act quite contrary to what they should do, that is, instead of keeping the Church, they betray it; and instead of edifying and setting up, they ruin and destroy it; and then the Dignity, and height of their Office, does but make the mischief to be the greater. As for the Passage of *St. Cyprian*, which *M. de Meaux* pretends to make some advantage of; I will venture to say, That nothing could ever be urged more improperly. Some private Persons in *Carthage*, fancying, tho without the least ground, that *St. Cyprian* their Bishop did not lead a good Life, without

without any more ado separated themselves, and would communicate no longer, either with him, or any of the flock. One amongst them, whose name was *Florentius*, wrote to *St. Cyprian*, and told him, that one part of the Church were scattered upon his account. *St. Cyprian* replies, That * *the men, who separated from the flock, were not really of the Church; that when the multitude left Jesus Christ, he turned about to his Apostles; and having said, What, and will ye also go away? John 6. 67, 68. St. Peter in the name of the whole Church returns him this answer, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life. Shewing hereby, that, although a rebellious multitude might desert, yet the Church did not forsake Jesus Christ, and that the Church is the People united with their Bishop, and the Flock joyned to their Pastors.*

* Nec patiat^{ur} Dominus triticum de area sua diripi, sed solæ possint paleæ de Ecclesia separari.

ri.—Et Dominus quoq; in Evangelio, cum eum loquentem discipuli dereliquerent, conversus ad duodecim dixerit, Nunquid & vos vultis ire? Respondet ei Petrus, dicens, Domine ad quem ibimus? verba vitæ æternæ habes, & nos credimus, & cognovimus, quoniam tu es filius Dei vivi. Loquitur illic Petrus.—Ecclesiæ nomine docens & ostendens, quia etsi contumax ac superba q̃ audire volentium multitudo discedat, Ecclesia tamen a Christo non recedit, & illi sunt Ecclesiæ plebs sacerdote adunata, & pastori suo grex adhærens. *Cyprian. Epist. 66. Edit. Oxon. 1682. Ep. 69. juxta Pamelium, & Rigaltium.*

What relation hath all this to our business? It concerned a bare accusation as to morals, an accusation never proved, never brought to trial, contradicted by the general testimony of the whole Flock; an accusation that might have been decided by the usual methods of Discipline. It is plain therefore, these men, who had been guilty of such a rash, heady separation, could not be either the Church, or any part of the Church; and in this case the Church was the body of the people united with their Bishop. But can *M. de Meaux* draw any comparison betwixt us and those men? Can he sincerely and seriously affirm, that the behaviour of the Prelates in our Fathers' times, was like *St. Cyprian's*? Or let their behaviour and morals be what they would, can he say our Fathers separated on that account? Does he think *St. Cyprian* would have liked it very well, that the people should continue united with their Bishop, tho that Bishop had taught false Doctrine, and Excommunicated all that refused to believe and embrace it with him? Which way could this Saint ever have admitted such a thought? He, who, on the contrary, was of opinion, people might and ought to separate from their Bishop, when the Bishop had yielded to the violence of Persecution, and in some measure been a partaker in the Idolatrous worship; he, who did not so much as acknowledg the Sacraments to be good and valid, when they were administred by Hereticks.

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Object.

Eng. Refl.
pag. 115.

Object. 11. *But let us come to these true Believers of whom Mr. Claude brags to us. I am not contented to dispute with them the Power he hath given them to depose all their Pastors, and make others; I say, that these true Believers never were. There must notwithstanding, according to this Minister, have been true Believers, even in the bosom of the Roman Church: for since, according to his Doctrine, there must be acknowledged, without any Interruption, an Ecclesiastical Ministry, and an Exterior Profession, of which it might have been said, There are the true Believers; they were true Believers under that Ministry, and in that Profession, whence they went forth. I ask, Did they Communicate in the sacrifice where Saints are Invoked, where their Relicks and Images are honoured, where the Pope is named as the Head of the Orthodox; where Jesus Christ is adored as present in body and soul; where he is offered, where the Holy Sacrament is received under one kind? Not to communicate in this Sacrifice, and to refuse the receiving of the Eucharist there, were manifestly to separate; and they are supposed not to have done that yet: But if they communicated there, continuing true Believers; in what an Error are now all our Reformed, who believe not themselves to have been true Believers, till since they left communicating there? Thus these true Believers are people in the Air; these Seven thousand, so much bragg'd of, in the new Reformation, and by Mr. Claude, are so far from appearing, that they are not in nature, since before the separation there was not any one who communicated not in the Sacrifice and Host, which our Reformed look on as Baal, before whom one must not bow the knee.*

Ans. This scruple hath been resolved a Hundred times already, as fully as any Man in reason and equity can desire: But the Romanists objections are like the Leaves of Trees that fall off and wither every year, and every year sprout out afresh. Let us suppose a Man that is not satisfied in the truth of what God told *Elias*, about the time of those grievous corruptions under *Abaz* and *Jezebel*, That he had reserved to himself seven thousand, which had not bowed the knee to *Baal*, he would put exactly the same question to M. de Meaux, that M. de Meaux does to us here: Did these Seven thousand communicate in those publick Sacrifices where *Baal* was worshipped, or did they not? For if they did not communicate in them, if they positively refused to partake in them, this were manifestly to separate, and they are supposed not to have done that yet; seeing *Elias* professes he knew no such thing, *I only am left alone*, says he: And if they did communicate, in what an Error was *Elias* then to believe, that by serving *Baal*, the *Israelites* had forsaken the Covenant of God?

What answer will M. de Meaux find for this Man? For the matter in question is not, whether the Church was preserved, or not preserved

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in *Judah* all this while; but which way those Seven thousand in *Israel* were preserved; this is the point he must answer to directly, without any shuffling, or wheeling about to the Church of *Judah*. *M. de Meaux* must tell him then in the first place, That men must acquiesce in the Word of God, without starting any nice scruples in opposition to it. That these two truths are manifestly declared in Scripture; first, That those men had not made an open separation, because *Elias* complains he was all alone; and then, that they did not communicate in the worship of the Idol, because God himself gives that testimony of them; There we must stick; and altho we do not apprehend which way they could without a separation, still keep their Consciences undefiled, these sort of doubts must not be indulged, nor questions put, that depend upon particular Circumstances, and every single Man's condition. He will answer in the second place, that if we search into the business thoroughly, it is not so very hard to conceive, how these persons might preserve themselves in the very midst of *Israel's* corruptions; because it is highly probable, the worship of the true God was not utterly abolished among them, but only that of *Baal* superadded to it; *How long*, says *Elias* to this people, *will ye halt between two opinions?* Which plainly intimates, that they had joyned these two sorts of worship together. Thus then these Seven thousand might preserve themselves, by distinguishing the good from the evil, the clean from the unclean; and this distinction they made, according as their own condition, and the Circumstances of the times would allow, without pulling persecution upon their own heads from those of a Contrary opinion, by making an unreasonable bustle about the business.

1 King. 18.

This is to a tittle the reply we would make to *M. de Meaux* his question. Jesus Christ hath promised, that he will be with his Church, *always unto the end of the world*, and that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against her*, this we will hold to; and tho we could not resolve what methods he took to preserve his faithful, during all the disorders and corruptions of the latter Ages, yet we would not question in the least, but the thing was done some way or other; because we know very well, that he is able to do more than we are able to comprehend. So that we would look upon this as a question that did not at all concern us, because the knowledge of it depends upon an infinite number of particular and personal Circumstances, which no Man is bound to know. But then withal we shall tell him further, that the Corruption of the latter Ages did not consist in quite throwing off Christian Religion, or disclaiming it, but in the additions and mixtures, that were made of false Doctrines, and a false Worship with the true; and so we may with-

out any great difficulty apprehend, how the true Believers preserved themselves untainted in the midst of those corruptions. Now that was by having no share in them, by separating the evil from the good, by rejecting the one, and practising the other, and all this without any stir, or open bustle, till such time as there was a necessity that compelled them, or the glory of God manifestly called them to it; all the while living in hopes, that his good Providence would find out some course for it. If M. de Meaux thinks I advance a notion in this, that is impossible, I desire he would please to acquaint us, what notion he hath of the Seven thousand in *Elias* his time, that kept themselves free from all the Corruptions of *Israel*.

Let us further, suppose a Man not fully satisfied about the Churches uninterrupted Succession in *Judah*, during the horrible Corruptions introduced by *Achaz* and *Manasseh*, must not he put the very same Question too? There must, to maintain this perpetual Succession, be found some Faithful and Elect, for M. de Meaux hath told us, That the Elect are Essential to the Church; and consequently, where we cannot suppose some Faithful and Elect to remain, neither can we suppose the continuance of a Church. Resolve me then, which way these true Believers subsisted there; did they communicate in all the Abominations of the Heathen, with which the Service of God was then filled? Or did they not communicate? For by M. de Meaux's own Confession, the Abominations of that time, did very far exceed all that had ever gone before. If they did not communicate, if they refused at all to partake in them, this was manifestly to separate, which M. de Meaux hath himself assured us they never did. *Isaiah*, says he, *who lived during all the Reign of Ahaz, for all these Abominations of the King, the Priest Urijah, and almost all the People, never separated from the Communion of Judah, no more than did the rest of the Prophets, who lived at the same time, and in all the other.* If they did communicate, in what an Error then was *Isaiah* himself, and after him *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*, to cry out so mightily against these Abominations, and suppose the People were guilty of mortal Sin against God, for joyning in such Services as they joined in all the while themselves? Whatever answer M. de Meaux shall think fit to return, I am sure he will plead our Cause in it, and take off his own Objection. When he says, that the Prophets who reprov'd and abhorred the Impieties of that People, *did not separate from the Communion*; I will desire him to tell me, what pretence he can have for telling us here, that not communicating in the Sacrifice of the Mass, and refusing to receive the Eucharist with them, was manifestly to separate? For if the Errors and Idolatrous Worship of *Judah* might be reprov'd and detested, and yet no separating in

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p. 16.

in the case; how comes it to pass, that men may not as well forbear to communicate in the Sacrifice of the Mass, and refuse to receive the Eucharist there, and yet not separate neither? When he tells us, *There was a continual Succession of Prophets, who instead of adhering to the Peoples Errors, or dissembling them, rose up against them with force.* If his meaning be, that there was a Body of Prophets, who always made open Profession, that they disallowed, and renounced the Peoples Errors; my answer must be, that his Assertion is utterly untrue. *The Priest and the Prophet have erred, says Isaiah, they err in Vision, they stumble in Judgment. The Lord hath poured out upon you the Spirit of deep sleep, he hath closed your Eyes, the Prophets and your Rulers, the Seers hath he covered. They said unto the Seers, See not; and to the Prophets, prophesy not unto us right things, but speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceit. The Prophets, says Jeremiah, have prophesied by Baal. The house of Israel is ashamed, they, their Kings, their Princes, and their Priests, and their Prophets. Saying to a Stock, Thou art my Father; and to a Stone, Thou hast brought me forth. The Prophets prophesy falsely, and the Priests bear rule by their means, and my People love to have it so. From the least of them, even unto the greatest of them, every one is given unto Covetousness; and from the Prophet, even unto the Priest, every one dealeth falsely. Both Prophet and Priest are profane, yea in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord. I have not sent these Prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. Thy Prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee, and they have not discovered thine Iniquity to turn away thy Captivity, but have seen for thee false Burthens, and causes of Banishment. There is a conspiracy of Prophets in the midst thereof (says Ezekiel) like a roaring Lyon, ravening the Prey; they have devoured Souls. Their Prophets have daubed them with untempered Mortar, seeing Vanity, and divining Lyes.* M. de Meaux then is of necessity reduced to say, that there were from time to time some Prophets, who constantly cried out against their Corruptions; this is all he can say; and if this be sufficient to evince such a Subsistence of true Believers, as we are disputing about; we will tell him in like manner, that there were constantly some good Men, who from time to time had the courage to cry out against the Errors of Rome; and this he knows to be very true.

When he alledges, *That a great part of the People publicly followed these Prophets, as appears in that this impious Prince filled Jerusalem with Innocent Blood:* We shall reply, That he will not find any great part of the People followed those Prophets publicly at the time when they cried out against the Idolatries; nor that *Manasseh* shed any Blood upon this Occasion; the Scripture says no such thing. But he will find, that a very considerable part of the People did publicly follow those that cried out against the Errors of Rome, and that against these Persons it was they.

*Meaux's
Eng. Conf.
p. 17, 18.*

Isa. 28. 7.

29. 10.

30. 10.

*Jer. 2. 8,
26, 27.*

Ch. 5. 13.

Ch. 6. 13.

*Jer. 23. 11,
21.*

Lam. 2. 14.

*Ezek. 22.
25, 28.*

*Meaux's
Eng. Conf.
Pag. 18.*

Ibid.

they rais'd Persecutions; against these they sent out Crusades and Holy Wars, or against those they set up Inquisitions; and if there were no other Argument, but the shedding their Blood, required to prove the Existence of those Faithful we are debating of, the Church of Rome hath taken abundant care, that this Proof should not be wanting. When he tells us, That *these Prophets, who confirmed their Mission by visible Miracles, hindred the Corruption from gaining all; and whilst a terrible Multitude, and perhaps the Gross of the Synagogue was drawn unto Idolatry, they kept the Tradition of the Truth in the People of Israel.* We will desire to know of him, whether he thinks those Prophets had a sufficient Call and Authority for opposing themselves with all their might, against the Corruption of the times, tho they had wrought no Miracles. If he thinks they had, what does he throw in this word Miracles here for? But then we will tell him too, that those who cried out against the Errors of Rome, did also hinder the Corruption from gaining all; and that whilst a terrible Multitude, and the Gross of the Prelates and Ministers were drawn into Error, these kept the Tradition of the Truth in *Christendom.* In a word, let M. de Meaux turn which way he please, we will bear him Company, and he shall not be able to take one step in his, but we will in our Argument take the same.

Let him inform us, if he please, by what means he supposes it was, that the true Believers were preserved in this same Jewish Church, before the coming of Jesus Christ. The Superstitions and Errors which Christ found so rife among them; did not all spring up in a Night; they were of an ancient standing, and Christ himself calls them the *Traditions of the Elders.* They were publicly taught and practised. What course did the Faithful take to secure themselves from them? If they peremptorily refused to believe and partake in them; this M. de Meaux will tell you, was manifestly to separate; and yet we take it for granted, that they did not separate neither. If they might be tinctured with them, without any prejudice to the Salvation of their Souls, why then did Jesus Christ give such strict and particular Charge to his Disciples to beware of them, as of an ill Leaven? Or, what Reason had he for upbraiding the Scribes and Pharisees, with bringing over Profelytes, and making them the Children of Hell, as well as themselves?

M. de Meaux seems to have foreseen this difficulty, and therefore he endeavoured to prevent it, by saying, That *the Doctors of the Law had many pernicious Maxims and Practices, which crept in, and got ground by little and little; they became common, but they were not passed into Doctrines of the Synagogue.* I beg the favour of all my Readers, that they would take

very

very particular notice of these Words, for they more than half decide the Controversy between us, and indeed within a very little make an utter end of it.

1. From henceforward, It is a judg'd Case between him and me, that it may so happen, that all this exterior Body, which he calls the Church, should be filled with *pernicious Maxims and Practices*; that they should get ground in it, and become common; for all this evidently appears to have come to pass, by that instance of the Jewish Church, as M. de Meaux acknowledges. Consequently then they must not think to impose upon us with a general Consent, nor a common Practice, as if these were things Infallible. The Church must be allowed to continue liable to Failings and Surprises; not only in respect of Practice, but in matters of Religion, *pernicious Maxims and Practices* both may get ground, and become common in it.

2. It will also be a concluded Point between him and me, That these *pernicious Maxims and Practices* may infect not the People only, or private Lay-persons, but the Body of the Ministry too, the Doctors of the Law, and the Gros of the Synagogue, as M. de Meaux expresses it, that they may get ground, and become common even among them, that is, they may be publickly taught, and have the advantage of being recommended by the Authority of those, to whom the guidance of the Church is committed; and consequently, the Ministry may by that means become very corrupt, and exceedingly perverse, not only in their manners, but even in the maxims of Religion.

3. It will be taken for granted between him and me, That this darkening, as well of the Church, as the Ministry, which disfigures the Face of it, and makes it difficult for men positively to determine, that God preserves his Faithful and Elect there, is not any *Chimæra* of the Protestants inventing; but that it is a thing which may, nay which actually hath come to pass. For, what can be said better of a Society, in which the *Doctors* retain a great many *pernicious Maxims and Practices*, which get ground, and become common there, than that it is a Church, whose Condition is very disorderly and confused?

4. It will once more be taken for granted on both sides, That these *pernicious Maxims and Practices*, may insensibly insinuate themselves into the Church and Ministry, or as M. de Meaux expresses it, *get ground, and become common*, without any great noise or bustle about them. Consequently, all the Wranglings we have had hitherto about insensible changes in the Church, have been very unjust and impertinent. M. de Meaux acknowledges a possibility of their happening in *Maxims and Practices* both, and even in such of both sorts as are *pernicious*.

5. We

5. We shall be fully agreed besides, That, altho some *pernicious Maxims and Practices* do get ground, and become common; yet the Church and the Ministry do both subsist still, and maintain an uninterrupted Succession, so long as Salvation is still in any sort possible to be obtained in that Communion. From whence it follows, that we ought not to be charged, either with believing that the Church does at any time absolutely cease to exist, or with teaching, that the Ministry is ever perfectly extinct; all which they take occasion to lay at our Door, from our saying, that both Church and Ministry have both of them been extremely corrupted. And M. de Meaux would do well to be the first Man, that leaves off urging this Accusation against us.

6. He and I shall be further agreed, That notwithstanding these *pernicious Maxims and Practices*, which get ground, and become common, as well in the Church, as the Ministry; God does still continue to preserve his Faithful and Elect there, some way or other; for such there must have been still under the Ministry of those Doctors of the Law, or otherwise the Church must absolutely have ceased. The Elect are *Essential* to the Church, as we have heard from M. de Meaux's own mouth. So that he must not for the future pretend to call us to an account, for maintaining the Subsistence of true Believers, under a very corrupt Ministry before the Reformation; because he himself allows the same thing under the *Jews* corrupt Ministry, before Christ's coming into the World.

7. We shall moreover agree, That what Method soever we may conceive God Almighty takes for the preserving his Faithful and Elect in a corrupt Communion; yet this must always be effected by securing them from that Corruption, and not suffering them to be infected by it. For there is not the least likelihood, that either M. de Meaux or I should imagine, that God brings them to Salvation by *pernicious Maxims and Practices*. The plain consequence whereof is, that, altho men may be in a Communion, where there are such pernicious Maxims and Practices, yet still there may be some means found to secure themselves from them, tho they be never so common, or have got never so much ground.

8. We must also of necessity agree, That what Ministry soever the Faithful live under, they are not only priviledged, but obliged too to know, whether there be not some *pernicious Maxims and Practices* taught in it, and become common amongst them. For, since this is a thing which may, and by M. de Meaux's own Confession, hath actually happened under the Legal Ministry; he is a wiser Man than to desire the

Faithful

Faithful should hazard their Salvation, by exposing themselves to the danger of following such *pernicious Maxims and Practices*. Whence it evidently follows, that they have a right of Examination, at least, so far as these Maxims and Practices are concern'd, which creep in by little and little, and become common, without being pass'd into Doctrines. This is what M. de Meaux cannot possibly deny them.

9. Lastly, we shall also be agreed, that when a very great many of these *pernicious maxims and practices*, which have got ground, and are become common, do appear in the Church, that is, in the exterior society of professors, and in the Ministry; it were the highest piece of injustice that could be, not to acknowledg that a Reformation of abuses is in such a case necessary. M. de Meaux would not sure have Gods faithful and elect Children continue always in danger of being infected by these Errors. Now from hence it follows, that our Fathers requiring a Reformation, as they did, was in this respect however, regular, and that they ought not to have been run down as they were, nor such offence took merely at the naming a Reformation.

Thus far you may easily discern a perfect agreement between M. de Meaux and me, because all these Articles are every one of them the natural and inevitable consequences of that sentence which I recited out of his Book. All the difference now left between us, may be reduced into this one enquiry; What we are to think of such things as have been *pass'd into Doctrines*, that is, such as have been Canonically determined and appointed by an Authentick definitive sentence. Of these we may have an opportunity to say something hereafter; for the present we need only draw this Inference, That since by M. de Meaux his own Confession, men might secure themselves in the Communion of the Synagogue, from their *pernicious maxims and practices*, though they were become very *common*, and were by the Doctors and Ministers publickly taught, and recommended to the people; he ought not to think it strange in us, that we also think men might do the same thing before the Reformation, while continuing in Communion with those of the *Latin Church*, and living under their Ministry. The difference of things having, or having not been pass'd into Doctrine, does not in this case fall under our consideration at all. For the question is not now, what the Believers of right might do, but what it was really possible for them to do. Now there was no more difficulty in abstaining from the belief and practice of a thing that had actually been pass'd into a Doctrine, than there was in abstaining from the belief and practice of a thing which was taught by the Ministry, recommended by them, and was become common, though it had not been formally pass'd into a Doctrine. The Doctors of the Law

were every whit as zealous for their maxims, and practices, which they held by Tradition, as ever they of the *Latin Church* were, for the things past into Doctrines among them. The healing an infirm man, or plucking Ears of Corn to satistie nature, upon the Sabbath-day, was accounted as great a crime among them, as it is among the *Latins* to work upon the Sunday.

But besides it is plain, that the greatest part of those things which we disapprove in the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, were not as yet passed into Doctrines before the Reformation. There had been no Canonical decisions given at that time, concerning Invocation of Saints, nor concerning worshipping their Relicks, nor concerning the worshipping of Images, nor concerning the number of the ~~Seven~~ Sacraments, nor concerning the use of Indulgences, nor the necessity of submitting to the Pope of *Rome*, and his See; nor in behalf of the merit of Good Works, nor for the proper and Propitiatory Sacrifice of the Mass, nor for the highest Adoration of the Host, nor for the making the Books, which we call the *Apocrypha*, Canonical Scripture; nor for Prayers in a Tongue which the people do not understand; nor for I know not how many Maxims and practices besides. The Doctors of the Law had espoused them, they had got ground, and advanced by little and little, they were become common, but they were not passed into Doctrines; so that the Faithful supposed by us to have lived under this Ministry, were in that respect in the very same condition with those, whom *M. de Meaux* supposes to have lived under the Doctors of the Synagogue.

I might here add another parallel instance of those Faithful, who as *St. Augustine* hath taught us, did live, and preserve themselves entire under the Ministry of the *Arrians*, without partaking at all in their Heresie. There was then a principal Doctrine in debate, and the most important of all Practices whatsoever, for the point in dispute was *Jesus Christ's Divinity*, and the paying him the Worship of *Latria*, which the *Arrian* Heresie had condemned. And yet *St. Augustine* assures us, that several in that Communion kept the true faith, and were not at all polluted with the impiety of their Ministers.

I might also observe, that before the Reformation there was such a general ignorance spread over the whole body of the Ministry, and that the Ministers of those times were so prodigiously careless of their flocks, that it cannot be a thing impossible to be conceived, that many people might live in Communion with them, and yet neither communicate in the Doctrines, nor corrupt practices among them. For, as for their Doctrines, they could scarce be imparted to the people; and when they were, it was after such a fashion, as was more likely to meet with a repulse

pulse, than be able to seduce them. And for the practices, though they were common enough, yet they were not by a great deal so narrowly and scrupulously enquired into then, as they were afterwards, when the Reformation began to shew its head. And thus several things which were in their own nature exceeding bad, yet became accidentally of very auspicious consequence, and instrumental to the preservation of the Church.

Object. 12. *They say, that these true Believers, who by their actual separation compos'd the Reformation, were before separated in their heart from the publick Idolatry. But first, this is not sufficient. Secondly, 'tis not so.*

Meaux's
Eng. Re-
flect. p.
116.

Ans. I do acknowledg that an inward separation from any publick Idolatry would not be sufficient in a man that still continued to practice it outwardly as others do, because this were a notorious hypocrisy. But if, when one is separated inwardly in the heart, he cease from the practice and outward acts of it, and if he be ready to make a publick and authentick denial to do so, when he shall be called thereunto by any necessity of declaring himself; I assert that this is enough in times of oppression, such as we suppose that to be, which preceded the Reformation. This was sufficient for the faithful in the reign of *Ahab* and *Jezebel*, this was sufficient for them before our Saviour's coming into the world, when living under the Ministry of the Doctors of the Law; this, if we may believe *St. Augustine*, was sufficient for the Orthodox Christians, under the Ministry of the *Arrian* Bishops; and what reason then hath *M. de Meaux* to deny the sufficiency of it, for those that lived under the *Latin* Ministry before the Reformation?

The true believers (says *M. de Meaux*) *are according to Mr. Claude, those who make profession of the Truth, of Piety, of real Sanctity. Where then the profession is wanting, there are neither true believers, nor a true Church.* I answer, that the true believers concerned in the present dispute, did make profession of the Truth, of Piety, and real Sanctity, in that they made profession of the true Religion, the essence or substance whereof remained still under the *Latin* Ministry, and in that they did not partake in the Errors, and the false additional services put to it. And there was not any more express profession needful, either for the seven thousand in *Elias* his time, or for those others mentioned by me just now.

But this is visibly not so (says *M. de Meaux* again); *else, when Luther and Zuinglius appeared, their disciples must have made this declaration, that they always had their heart averse from the Roman faith; on the contrary, they are seen to speak in all the Pages of their Books, as newly retired out of the darkness of the Papacy.*

But is *M. de Meaux*, in good earnest, of opinion, that the Disciples of *Luther* and *Zuinglius* ought to have made formal declarations of all that they thought before the Reformation, and that these declarations ought to be inserted in Books, and so made publick? Will he not then believe, that there was any body since or before *Luther* and *Zuinglius* his time, that recognised the Abuses of *Rome*, unless they committed these very words to writing, *This is what we always believed, we always had our heart averse from the Roman faith, and from the Pope, and from his Bishops, and from the Real Presence, and from the Mass?* If all the world had been at that time strongly perswaded of the Holiness and Purity of the *Romish* Religion, how is it probable that the Reformation should ever have been desired and embraced with so much eagerness and zeal as it was; and that the people should be so mighty earnest in asking the Gospel of their Princes and Magistrates, as the story informs us they appeared? If all the world had been well satisfied with the *Romish* Doctrine and Worship, would there have been found, so many persons of Learning of *Luther's* side, and Espousers of his Cause, as 'tis plain there were, and that they did this immediately, as soon as ever he shewed himself, as even our adversaries themselves agree they did? Wise and understanding men do not use to alter their opinions on the sudden, in matters of such consequence as Religion; and yet we know it to be very true, that almost all the great and eminent Scholars in *Germany*, and other places, were favourers of *Luther*, as soon as he began to preach and write against the Superstitions. This is plain matter of fact that cannot be disowned, and argues that the matter was in a very good disposition, that could be so soon wrought upon. And it signifies nothing to say that they spoke as *men newly raised out of the darkness of the Papacy*; for suppose them in what Circumstances you please, whether as lately undeceived, or as having been sensible of the abuses and errors for some time before, they might very well say, that God had brought them out of the midst of darkness, because he had brought them out of a Communion in which darkness was predominant.

Eng. Refl.
p. 116,
117.

Object. 13. *But see here the entire ruin of the new Reformation. In the definition that Mr. Claude just now gave us of the true Church, he says, 'Tis the true Believers, who make profession of the Christian Truth under a Ministry which furnishes her with necessary Aliments, without depriving her of any one. If before the Reformation there was no such Church, the true Church, against Mr. Claude's supposition, no longer was; and if there was such a Church, where profession was made of the Truth, and which by her Ministry gave necessary ali-*

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ments to the children of God, without depriving them of any one, what need was there of the pretended Reformed's Separation?

Ans. It is a marvellous thing that the wound *M. de Meaux* gives us, should be healed a great while before the blow was struck. Ten years ago did we get up out of this pretended ruin, that he pretends to crush and utterly overwhelm us with now. For this objection that had not then a being, was thus answered by me, as long since as the year 73, in the Defence of the Reformation against the Author of the Book of Prejudices. If it shall be objected, 'that our Fathers ought not to have undertaken the Reformation, but should have left things in the same condition they found them, and that upon this account, that supposing the *Latin Church* to have been in our opinion never so corrupt, yet still Salvation might be obtained in her Communion; I shall answer, that by the same reason the Orthodox Christians should never have entertained any thoughts of re-establishing the purity of Faith in the Church, nor of exterminating the *Arrian Heresie*, because granting the Church to be never so tainted with that Heresie, yet still there was room, and opportunities left, for working out mens Salvation in their Communion, and under the Ministry, as it stood at that time. If he say further, that our Fathers ought not however when they reformed themselves, to have separated from the rest, who were not for any Reformation, nor have deserted their Communion, and Congregations; I must reply again, that at this rate neither should the Orthodox believers, while they endeavoured to purge the Church of *Arrianism*, have separated however from those that were inclined to retain *Arrianism*; but should have continued with them in the same Communion, and have frequented the same Assemblies, which nevertheless it is plain they never did.

And a little afterwards, 'St. *Augustin* hath answered. That this is a most absurd objection. For 'tis every whit as absurd, as if a man should argue, that we must not go about to cure a sick person, because he is alive still, notwithstanding all his sicknesses; for 'tis just the same thing to pretend that we ought not to attempt at cleansing the Church and Ministry from some Heresie wherewith it is infected, because there are still some means of Salvation left for them that abide in her Communion, and under her Ministry. That, on the contrary, it is our duty to employ our utmost endeavours for the settling Christianity in its beauty and perfection, for fear the distemper grow upon us, and become past cure through too much carelessness, and least that part of the Church which as yet continues sound, be quite corrupted too by the spreading of the infection. Now this is exactly the Answer for our case.

'case. Our Fathers were obliged to do all they could, for the reform-
 'ing the *Latin Church* by their Exhortations, by their Writings, by
 'their Sermons, by their good Example, because it is constantly a duty
 'incumbent upon us to use our utmost endeavours, according as the
 'Circumstances of the time, and our own abilities will permit, for the
 'setling Religion in a state of Purity, for fear Errors and Superstitions
 'should at long run become universal, and so the whole Church be lost
 'through our lukewarmness. For, although Jesus Christ hath past his
 'word, that it shall never perish, yet to neglect the proper means put
 'into our hands for its preservation, is a tempting God, and making
 'our selves unworthy of his favour; and so much the more so, because
 'as far as it is possible for man to apprehend of the matter, there was no
 'other means left but that of Reformation. Further still, *St. Augustin*
 'answered, that in order to cleansing the Church from *Arrianism*, there
 'was a necessary obligation upon men to separate from those that ob-
 'stinately persisted in Heresie; and that the inflexible stiffness they
 'shewed for retaining their Error, was a sufficient warrant for men to
 'withdraw from their assemblies. But our Answer is still of greater
 'force than this, That when our Fathers were labouring to bring about
 'the Reformation, they were obliged to forsake the Assemblies of those,
 'who not only obstinately refused to reform with them, and who did
 'all that ever they could to stifle and oppose the Reformation, but who
 'went a great deal further, in attempting to impose upon mens Consci-
 'ences a new necessity of believing their opinions; and were so rigor-
 'ous, that they proceeded to Excommunication against all that refused
 'to believe them." Thus did I without ever thinking of any such thing,
 labour before-hand to evade this *ruining* objection made by *M. de Meaux*;
 I shall say no more of it at present. Let us see now what care he takes
 afterwards to support it.

Eng. Refl.
 P. 117.

Object. 14. *But it may be in teaching all these Doctrines, they had not yet
 thought of Excommunicating those that opposed them. Whence then come so many
 Anathema's against Berengarius, against the Waldenses, and Albigenes,
 against John Wickliff, and John Hufs, and so many others, whom our Re-
 formed will count amongst their Ancestors?*

Ans. I confess the Court of Rome had already given sufficient pre-
 vocations to separate from her Communion, by her *Anathema's* against
Berengarius, the *Waldenses* and *Albigenes*, against *John Wickliff*, and against
John Hufs, and by the Persecutions raised against them. By this means
 she had made a separation not only just and warrantable, but necessary,
 and

and inevitable to all those that fell under the severities of her Crusades and Inquisitions, because she perfectly forced such to a Declaration. But still that there was no means left of obtaining Salvation under the *Latin* Ministry; and that all the world was reduced to an absolute and indispensable necessity of withdrawing from that Church, I utterly deny. The *Arrians*, who had delivered impious Determinations in their Councils, and filled both the Eastern and Western parts with most barbarous Persecutions, had given St. *Athanasius*, St. *Hilary*, and some others abundant occasion to separate from them, and hold distinct Assemblies. But that there was therefore no Salvation to be had under the *Arrian* Ministry; and that all men were reduced to such a strait, that they must of necessity either leave them, or be damned, is what St. *Augustin* never says, neither do we say it of the *Latin* Ministry. The Inquisition and Persecution did not at first put a Test upon all the World, there was still some Liberty left, provided Men could but content themselves with living quietly, and made no disturbance; and the Prelates, and other Clergy in those days were so well satisfied, if Men would but suffer them to live in ease and idleness, that they never gave themselves the trouble of a particular Scrutiny into Mens Hearts and Thoughts, nor of putting any constraint of communicating in their Mysteries, upon such as let them alone, and never provoked them with any Contradiction.

Besides too, as St. *Augustin* acknowledges, That a great part of the People were seduced by the Impostures of the *Arrians*, who yet retained a Christian simplicity, and acted according to the best of their knowledge; so there is no question to be made, but there were several such in this case. The wretched persecuted persons were represented to be the greatest Monsters in nature, and taxed with the horriest crimes in the world; and while they were blackned with so many calumnies, and false imputations, very few people could be truly informed, what their belief and practices really were. Which very thing utterly evacuates the argument that *M. de Meaux* pretends to fetch from those Excommunications and Persecutions, because the Generality of the people being perfectly unacquainted with the true occasions of them, they could not produce their natural and proper effect.

We must put a mighty difference between a time of oppression, ignorance and general darkness, in which on one hand the mischief of the *Romish* Errors and Practices were not so fully disclosed, and on the other there was no opposite Communion to be found, into which the Faithful might incorporate themselves; and a time of clear light, of sufficient knowledge and liberty, when God had detected and exposed their Errors to publick view, and made them plain to all the world; and when

by the operation of his wonderful good Providence, he hath provided his Children with means of separating from the Corruptions of the Age they live in, and a possibility of holding with joy and edification, an Evangelical Communion, that shall be free, pure, and not exposed to any danger of corruption, from being engaged in common conversation, and concerned with Superstitious persons. In such a time as the former of these, men are necessitated to continue in an impure Communion, they sigh and lament the inconvenience, and intreat redress from Almighty God for it. But in such a time as the second, there is no continuing in such a Communion, without betraying an affection for, and complacency in the impurities of it; or to speak the softest that the thing will bear, without declaring that they prefer that before the purity of the Gospel of Christ, which will always involve such men in a great guilt.

And further, There is no question, but God; whose Mercies are infinite, would look upon such a time as the first, with a more tender and indulgent Eye, than he would upon the second; Because the Obligation of separating from those Errors, was every day enhanced, and become more strict by the accession of light men had, and the discoveries that were made of their deformity; and consequently, there was a stronger and more indispensable necessity to live no longer under a Ministry, that teaches and practices such Abuses. This is what St. Cyprian acknowledges, upon occasion of a Superstition that had been long in use in *Africa*, not to put any Wine in the Chalice at the Eucharist. * If, says he, any of our Predecessors, either through Ignorance, or a sincere misapprehension, have not kept and observed what Jesus Christ hath taught us, both by his Example and Authority; they may obtain a Pardon for it, by the mercy and favour of the Lord; but as for us, who have been particularly warned, and instructed by the Lord, this cannot be forgiven us.

* Si quis
de ante-
cessoribus
nostris vel
ignorant-
er, vel
simplici-

ter, non hoc observavit, & tenuit, quod nos Dominus & exemplo, & magisterio suo docuit, potest simplicitati ejus de indulgentia Domini venia concedi; nobis vero non poterit ignosci, qui nunc a Domino admoniti, & instructi sumus. *Cyprian. Epist. 63.*

Eng. Refl.
p. 117.

Obj. 15. But should all this be true, the Affairs of the Reformation would not be a jot the better; since still, before it had any Existence, there must be acknowledged a Ministry, where without teaching, either that the Sinner is justified by Faith alone, and the sole Imputation of Jesus Christ's Justice; or that God in the New Testament abhors Sacrifices celebrated in a sensible matter, or that he alone would be invocated to the Exclusion of that inferior and subordinate Prayer, which is addressed to Saints; or in fine, without any of those Articles which distinguish our Reformed from us, altho they place their Salvation in them; they

they ceased not to furnish the Children of God with all the Aliments necessary for the Spiritual Life, without depriving them of any one. *What has the Reformation wrought, if all these things are not necessary Aliments?*

Ans. What we tell M. de Meaux now, That before the Reformation the Ministry did furnish the Faithful with all things necessary for their Spiritual Life, is not any new thing. These Gentlemen have been told as much a thousand times over, and there was no need at all for repeating it so often here, or writing it in great Letters, and a different Character, to make People take more particular notice of it; for no Body, that I know of, hath any design to retract this Assertion. But we must add withal, what hath been told them a thousand times too, that the same Ministry did with and amongst these good aliments, dispence a great many others not only insipid, and of a very ill relish, but of qualities that were contrary to the Spiritual Life. Thus it became a Ministry mixt of Good and Evil, like that of the Doctors of the Law, mentioned by M. de Meaux before, which retained a great many *pernicious Maxims and Practices*; like to that of the Scribes and Pharisees, who sat in *Moses's Chair*, and yet taught abundance of false Doctrines. Now of this Mixture, some there were that took the bad part, and scarce any thing else, but utterly neglected the good; others chose the good, and refused the bad. The first followed the corrupt Inclinations and Propensity of Nature; the second were guided by the Impulses of Grace. And what can M. de Meaux pretend to find fault with, in all this?

He is concerned, that we do not reckon the Justification of a Sinner by Faith alone, and the Imputation of Christs Righteousness, nor the Exclusion of Sacrifices in a sensible Matter, nor the Rejection of Prayers directed to Saints, nor the other Articles that distinguish us from the *Romanists*, among the Aliments necessary for Spiritual Life. But either he is in jest, when he talks at this rate; or else it is for want of due Observation. Exclusions were never called Aliments in this World; the advice that is given you to abstain from a Poyson that would prejudice your Health, can never be termed an Aliment. A Man is not nourished, by causing him to abstain from bad Meats; but his nourishment proceeds from being made to eat of good and wholesome ones. There are two sorts of Points in Religion, the one sort are called *positive Points*, the other are called *negative Ones*; the first sort contain all those Doctrines that are necessary to be believed, and those Duties that are to be practiced; the second have relation only to the Errors that must be rejected, and

the sinful Acts that must be avoided. Now in strict and proper speaking, they are the first of these that effect mens Salvation; and the business of the second, is only to remove such things as might obstruct that Salvation. When a Man is going to any Place, his arrival at it, is not properly owing to the shunning of all the by-Roads that led another way, but to his keeping straight on in that track that leads thither. So likewise our Salvation is not properly owing, to our disclaiming all the Fopperies of the *Heathens*, the Extravagances of the *Jews*, or the Heresies of *Nestorius* and *Eutyches*, for the very *Atheists* do as much as this comes to; but we attain to it by following the Truths that are taught us by Jesus Christ. So that when we speak of *Aliments* to Spiritual Life, we do by that Expression mean only such Articles as are positive, and not the negative ones in the least; and consequently, when we say, That a Ministry furnishes Men with all these necessary *Aliments*, this cannot in reason have any other Construction put upon it, than what relates to those positive Articles; especially too, when we add moreover, that this Ministry mixes a great many bad and noxious Things, with those good and wholesome *Aliments*, and that the Faithful distinguish betwixt the clean and the unclean in their use of them.

This distinction being thus premised, I say in the next place, That the several points M. de Meaux hath instanced in, and which we and the Church of *Rome* differ about, if considered with relation to us, are merely negative points. Justification by Faith alone, and by the sole imputation of Jesus Christ's Righteousness, is held by us, as a point exclusive of Justification by the merit of mens own works. That there is not now under the New Testament any Sacrifice strictly and properly so called, is also another, exclusive of the Sacrifice of the Mass. The case is the same in our disallowing the Invocation of Saints, denying Transubstantiation and Real Presence, rejecting Adoration of the Sacrament, the Worship of Images, Relicks, and the Cross, the Doctrines of Purgatory, Prayers in an unknown Tongue, Communion unde one kind, the seat of Confession, the Sacrament of Confirmation, and that other of Extreme Unction, with several others. These are all in respect of us *Negative* points, which we do not call *Aliments*, for the reason I hinted before, that men are not saved by excluding and renouncing these Errors, but by Faith, and the practice of sound Truths, and the Precepts of the Gospel. We believe indeed, that the disowning several of these points, is necessary in order to Salvation; but that is only upon the account that men are bound to remove all the obstructions to their Salvation; and not upon a presumption, that that removal of it self can bring us into Covenant and Communion with God.

God. For the *Jews* and *Turks*, who do not allow the greatest part of them any room in their belief, are not for doing so, brought into this Communion. So that M. de Meaux's Argument hath nothing of a solid foundation at the bottom.

Object. 16. *Perhaps these necessary Aliments must be reduced to the Apostles Creed, or in general to the Scripture. But the Socinian Church retains this Creed and this Scripture, so that the Ministry of a Socinian Church would, according to this Rule, have furnisht the Children of God with all the necessary Aliments, without depriving them of any one.*

Eng. Refl.
p. 117, 118

Answ. We are not at all concerned to know what might be done under a Socinian Ministry, where men are deprived of the Articles of the Trinity, the Eternal Divinity of Jesus Christ, his Satisfaction for the Salvation of the World, the personality of the Holy Ghost, His operation upon mens Souls in order to their Conversion, and some others of the like nature; so that this Communion hath scarce any thing in it that can be called Christian, but barely the name. Our business is to enquire what might be done under the Ministry of the *Latin Church*, before the Reformation; and this is the point which M. de Meaux should have kept close to, without shifting the Cause, and running off to Hereticks, which hath no affinity at all with the case before us.

It is idle, and to no purpose for him to pretend, that they retain the Creed and Scripture, after he himself hath assured us, in the beginning of his Discourse to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, that *although the Socinians say with the mouth, I believe in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost, yet there is reason to accuse them of not believing these Articles, because they believe them not as they ought, nor according to their true sense.* The same thing is true concerning the Scripture, they only say with their mouth, that they retain it, whilst they do really and in effect evacuate it by their forced and unnatural Expositions, which contradict the plain sense of what is there delivered. It cannot therefore be urged upon this pretence, that their Ministry affords all *Aliments* that are necessary to our spiritual Life, without depriving men of any one, which yet we may and do affirm to have been done under the *Latin Ministry*.

Meaux's
Eng. Conf.
p. 2.

Object. 17. *All would be reduced to liberty of Conscience, and what Error soever is taught in the Ministry, provided they force none to follow their Decisions, and suffer all contrary Doctrine, good or bad, 'tis enough to make Mr. Claude say, that the Ministry furnishes the Children of God with all necessary Aliments, without depriving them of any one. But, according to this Pretention,*

Eng. Refl.
p. 113.

there would be no Society, whose Ministry should more furnish all necessary Aliments, than a Society of Socinians, who brag, that they will not damn any one.

Ans. It is by no means true, that all is reduced to Liberty of Conscience, because, besides that, we must suppose a Ministry furnishes men with all necessary Aliments to Spiritual Life, without depriving them of any one, which the *Socinian* Ministry does not do. And further yet, the Liberty used by the Faithful under the *Latin* Ministry, is quite another thing from that which the *Socinians* allow, when, as *M. de Meaux* tells us, they brag that they will not damn any one. This frees Mens Consciences from all fear of damnation, whatever belief they have, whether good or bad, orthodox or heretical. That, on the contrary, restrains the Conscience from evil, for fear of damnation, and fixes them to that which is good by a desire of Salvation. The first is a liberty of wickedness and impiety, making fundamental and essential points of Religion, to be only opinions in a manner arbitrary. The second is such a Liberty as is natural to the Conscience, that sets it at large from the Usurpation and Tyrannical Authority of Men, and subjects it only to the just and rightful Authority of God and his Truth. The first is a Liberty that destroys Religion and Conscience both, and almost subverts the Dominion of God over Mens Souls; for what is it less than subverting that dominion, to think, that no opinion, tho never so erroneous, can damn any body? But the second is a liberty that prescribes due bounds to Consciences, and while it rescues them from the false bands of iniquity, leaves them still bound, and in subjection to the obedience of Jesus Christ and his Gospel. For a man to confound these two sorts of Liberty, as *M. de Meaux* does here, is not to distinguish between night and days; for the first is in effect a liberty of darkness, that discerns nothing, and represents all objects alike; and the second is a Liberty of light, that puts a difference between good and evil, prejudicial and profitable.

Ibid.

Object. 18. If it be said, amongst our Reformed, that a *Socinian Church* overthrows the foundation, by denying the Divinity of Jesus Christ; 'tis also said there, that 'twas no less overthrown before their Reformation, by the Idolatries, which, as they say, reigned every where.

Ans. *M. de Meaux* does not make so good use of his Parts and Learning as he ought and might do. For there is a mighty difference between the *Socinians* and the *Latin* Ministry, taken in the Circumstances we suppose it in. The *Socinians* do formally and directly overthrow the

the foundation of Religion, which is the Eternal Divinity of Jesus Christ; and this they deny and oppose. The *Latin* Ministry did overthrow the foundation, not by formally denying it, for on the contrary they established and taught it; but by such superstructures and additions as hindred the effect of it; like the Doctors of the Law mentioned by M. de Meaux, that owned and taught the Law, but added *their own pernicious maxims and practices* to it; like the Scribes reproved by Jesus Christ, who taught *Moses*, but flung in the leaven of their own Doctrines besides; as the false Apostles in the Churches of *Galatia* did, that taught Jesus Christ, but imposed the observation of the *Mosaic* rites over and above. It was possible therefore, for Men under the *Latin* Ministry, as in these other cases, to separate betwixt the clean and the unclean, and by this means restore to the fundamental Doctrines, their genuine and proper efficacy. Under the *Socinian* Ministry this is impossible to be done.

Object. 19. *If they will, in fine, imagine, that 'tis more dangerous to destroy the foundation by subtraction with the Socinians, than with the Roman Church by these pretended Additions, which they call Idolatry; besides all the Principles which we have just now shewn there according to the Principles of the Reformed, and even before their Reformation; it were an unheard-of extravagance to believe, that it would be more easy for these true Believers, who ought to make the distinction of Doctrines under a Ministry full of Errors, to cut off what is superfluous, than to supply what is defective; or that the Foundation of Faith is more certainly overthrown by diminishing than by adding; the Scripture having so often comprehended under one common malediction as well those that diminish, as those that add.*

Eng. Refl.
Page 118.

Ans. It is a marvellous thing, that this Prelate will not see a thing so very plain to be discerned, as the difference there is between a Subtraction and an Addition. I acknowledg both of them to be dangerous, both sinful and condemned by the Word of God; but does it follow from thence, that both of them are equally so? Or, that it is as easy to supply a defect, as to pare off a Superfluity? I am verily perswaded, that God will never suffer the whole body of the Christian Ministry to fall into *Socinianism*; so that, being men ought not to dispute upon idle suppositions made in the Air, I do not admit of this. But if such a dreadful unhappiness should come to pass, I aver, that the Faithful would be then obliged to withdraw from under this Ministry, and immediately of themselves, so far as lay in their power, to make other Ministers, according to that natural right belonging to the Christian Society, to have such an order.

For

For there is no enduring upon any terms under the guidance of Men, who have, without ever seeking to palliate the matter, declared open Hostility against the Eternal Divinity of the Son of God, his satisfaction for the Sins of the World, the Infiniteness of the Divine Nature, the Personality and Graces of the Holy Ghost; and who come nearer indeed to *Mahometism* than Christianity.

Eng. Conf.
p. 19.

Now I am not of opinion, that the same assertion can be maintained of a Ministry corrupted by addition; and M. de Meaux must excuse me, if I tell him he blows hot and cold with the same breath. He affirms, Men have lived under the Ministry of the Doctors of the Law, who had introduced *many pernicious maxims and practices*. He tells us, *Jesus Christ himself honoured their Ministry; that he sent the Lepers to them, that he frequented the Temple, and reprehending the abuses, continued always joyned to the Communion of God's people, and the Order of the publick Ministry*; and yet now he employs all his vigour to maintain, that it was as difficult and dangerous to live under the *Latin Ministry* corrupted by addition, as it would be to live under the *Socinian*, which overthrows Religion, by taking away one of the principal foundations of it. Let him now tell us clearly and sincerely, whether he himself think Men might continue under a *Socinian Ministry*. If he do think so, 'tis unjust in him to alledge this instance, and foul disputing to argue from hence, that Men could not continue under the *Latin Ministry* as it was corrupted; and if he do not think so, he did ill to acknowledge that Men might, and actually did continue under the Ministry of the Scribes and Doctors of the Law. As Men continued then under the Ministry of those Doctors, because it afforded them still all necessary Aliments to Faith and Piety; and all that was needful to be done, was only to cast away their counterfeit additions, which is not a parallel case to that of the *Socinian Ministry*; exactly so did they continue under the Ministry of the *Latin Communion*, because that supplied them with all Aliments necessary for their spiritual Life; and all they had to do, was only to reject the Errors and false services that had been added to it; which is a thing that cannot be said of the *Socinian Ministry*. M. de Meaux is really very kind, he takes compassion upon us, and hath endeavoured to imitate our Lord, who binds up the wound he makes; who strikes, but heals withal.

Eng. Refl.
p. 119.

Object. 20. *'Twould be better then for Mr. Claude to set aside all this Ministry, and the perpetual Visibilty of the Church, and say, that 'tis in fine, sufficient, all this Visibilty being overthrown, that God hath preserved the Holy Scripture, where the Faithful, whether concealed, or open; whether dispersed, or reunited; whether always subsisting, or sometimes wholly extinct, shall clearly find,*

find, according to his Principles, without any need of the Ministry, all necessary Aliments. For also of what use is a Ministry to them, in which Errors prevail?

M. de Meaux cannot have any just occasion of complaint, if I go on in the same Road that he does. Wherefore then should not he set aside all that Ministry of the Doctors of the Law, and the perpetual Visibility of the Jewish Church, to preserve the Holy Scripture only? For of what use is a Ministry to him, that had introduced abundance of Superstitions into the Religion and Worship? And what advantage can be made of these Doctors, who had a great many pernicious *Maxims and Practices*? Why would he have me set aside that which he hath not disclaimed to make use of himself, and which at the bottom is very true? Neither he nor I throw off the Scripture, when we maintain a corrupted Ministry, that furnishes the Faithful with all necessary Aliments to Salvation; and suppose that the Faithful separated between the Clean and the Unclean. Scripture was of use before the Coming of Christ, when the Doctors of the Law were in the Ministry; it was so, while he lived upon Earth, when the Scribes and Pharisees governed the Church; and it was so too, in the times of the *Latin Ministry*, before the Reformation.

Object. 21. *This is what the Protestants should say, to avoid the Inconveniences into which we cast them. But Mr. Claude neither durst, nor ever will dare to do it; because he would find in it Inconveniences yet more unsupportable, and more visible. 'Tis, in a word, because he found that by pushing the Authority and Sufficiency, as I may so say, of Scripture, independently of all Ecclesiastical Ministry, they must at last destroy the Scripture it self. In effect, he found in the Scripture, that the Scripture ought not to be as the Philosophy of Plato, the Rule of a Republick in Idæa, but of a People always subsisting, which this Scripture calls the Church. He hath found that this People ought to be always visible on the Earth, since they ought not only to believe with the Heart, but also to confess with the Mouth; and to use his terms, make profession of the Christian Truth.* Ibid.

Answer. It were to be wish't, That M. de Meaux would be so civil, not to prescribe Rules to us, nor to determine what we ought to do for the Defence of our Religion; and we for our own parts, can assure him already, that these pretended Inconveniences do not terrify us at all. The cause we assert, is like the House in the Gospel, against which the Floods beat, and the Winds blow to no purpose, because it is founded upon a Rock. In the mean time, we may take notice, that he is now obliged

obliged frankly to acknowledg himself mistaken, as to what our Opinions really are; and that in his Discourse to *Mademoiselle de Duras*, he hath all along supposed when speaking of us, not the Principles which indeed we do follow, but those which he fancied we should follow. He hath supposed, that we held the Church might be utterly extinct; and that we peremptorily and positively denied that she was always visible. And upon this supposal he makes what Remarks, and raises what Arguments he thought fit. Now he sees plainly that these two Suppositions of his are merely imaginary and groundless.

This is all that M. de Meaux's Reflections upon my Answer to his Discourse contain, and all that he hath offered against it, with the least appearance of Argument, or any shadow of Difficulty in it. I have related his own Words faithfully, I have not in any place departed from his meaning; I have inserted no Additions of my own to his Expressions, nor stretcht them to signifie more than they should be extended to; I have not omitted any thing that was worth my Consideration, and I have endeavour'd all along to Answer directly to the Point, without any Shifts and Evasions, without Illusion or Equivocation. The Remainder which makes up the Conclusion of the Book, consisting only of a Discourse by way of Exhortation, falls of course, after what hath been replied to what went before, and does not require any more particular Examination.

So that now we must pass to the Conference and his Reflections, which have reference to that; in treating of which, we shall endeavour, as we have hitherto done, to give M. de Meaux all the Satisfaction he can in reason expect.

THE END.

THE
L I F E
A N D
D E A T H
O F
Monsieur Claude

The famous Minister of
CHARENTON in *FRANCE*.

Done out of *French* by G. P.

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THE PREFACE: A DISCOURSE OF DEATH.

IT is no little advantage we receive from our Religion, that it is so mightily effectual to free us from all troublesome and disquieting thoughts, and to produce in us a settledness and firmness of mind, not apt to be easily shaken or moved; nay it inspirits men with courage and an ingenuous confidence, raising us above those fears and cares that follow false Opinions, and like Ghosts are wont to torment others. This is a great kindness that the Faith of Christ doth to those who live according to it, that it puts them into such a state, that they need fear nothing but displeasing, or offending God; especially our Christianity is the most proper remedy against the unreasonable fear of death, for that must necessarily distract the mind, and interrupt its peace by continual vexation and perplexity, in all those who are under the power of it, and therefore most fitly call'd by the Apostle here a state of Bondage. And deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to Bondage.

I shall not dispute here, whether by death is meant onely that which is temporal, or that which is eternal, since it is the apprehension or fear of eternal death chiefly that makes the other so terrible and affrighting. It would be an easie thing to conquer the fear of death, one might soon be able to think of it with the greatest indifference and unconcernedness, if we could but once thoroughly persuade

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persuade our selves that it would put an utter end to us. It is the Judgement to come, the never dying worm, the everlasting flames and immortality that are to follow, that make men so loth to think of dying, so unwilling to hear of it, so surpris'd at any sign or symptom of it. Were there no other state after this, the generality of men would be so far from fearing death, that they would fly to it as the onely certain cure for the evils of this life, any little disease, pain and burthen that they could not easily get rid of, they would seek a remedy for in death. Were there not, I say, in all men a natural dread of the ill Consequences of death, I cannot but imagine that mens own hands would send more daily to the cold Grave than all the diseases and casualties that our bodies are liable to, and it would be so far from an instance of courage and bravery to despise death, that the greatest Cowards would most desire it and soonest fly to it. But let them doe what they can, they cannot wholly free their minds, at least, from all suspicion of another world, and that makes them most commonly so fearfull of dying. So that it comes to the same, whether by death be meant here of the body onely, or a future state, for that which makes us fear death is because it leads us into another life.

Therefore I shall now explain to you,

- I. How men by the fear of death are subjected to Bondage.
- II. Inquire what this fear of Death is that Christ delivers us from.
- III. How Religion doth free us from it.

I. How men by the fear of death are subjected to Bondage. For this is the natural effect of any fear whatsoever, that it makes men slaves, it cowardizes them, and renders them mean and abject; particularly the fear of death so enslaves those that are possessed of it, that they can neither think freely nor act freely, and so consequently can neither be truly good nor really happy in this life.

This fear doth hinder men from thinking freely. And therefore we read of those that have commanded that none should name this word death in their hearing. Such persons who are afraid to die, dare not give themselves free liberty to exercise their minds, and are fain to take all occasions of diverting themselves, and find any entertainment rather than be put in mind of their continual danger.

They

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They use all arts to stifle and smother such thoughts as soon as they rise. Their hearts are ready to sink within them when they hear of any dismal calamity that hath happen'd unto a Neighbour or Friend, lest the same should betide them, and their own turn shortly come. And this is generally true, that he can neither fully enjoy himself nor take pleasure in himself, who hath not mastered this fear of death.

It hinders men from acting freely. He is a slave to every man, that hath power enough to doe him a mischief, who is afraid of death. Whatever Religion or Profession he is now of, you may soon threaten or scare him out of it, and make him whatever you please. Such a one cannot promise to himself that he shall continue one day longer in that mind, that faith that he now holds. There is no sin so vile or heinous, but what he may be brought to commit. Put but his life in danger, fright him thoroughly, and he will renounce all the Articles of his Creed, and break all the Commandments his Religion lays upon him, for every one that doth but wear a sword. And is not this a truly slavish condition, when we can neither command our own thoughts, nor be master of our own actions? And this is certainly the case of all those, that do not love God better than their lives, or that fear death more than sin. Such a one can neither be good nor happy; not good longer than while he finds it safe and free from all danger, and how can he be happy who stands in such a continual dread that a thousand accidents may this hour happen to him, and that death must certainly befall him, and that it is onely God's infinite patience that it doth not presently. And without any more words I know you will all grant this a miserable state. But now I do not say this is the effect of all kind of fear of death, I must therefore more particularly shew what kind of fear it is that makes men so unhappy.

*Most men have great reason to be afraid of dying, as much as a guilty Prisoner hath to be afraid of coming to his Tryal and brought to his Sentence. The more some men fear death, the more troublesome thoughts and apprehensions it occasions in them, the more capable are they to be wrought upon by it. Nay indeed it is impossible for a guilty person not to fear death, although perhaps sometimes out of a brave indifferency in the heat of bloud and passion, he may despise it, valiantly rush into the midst of danger, and with a bold and daring spirit voluntarily expose himself to it, out of a sense of pretended honour and gallantry; yet let him think coolly and soberly of such a thing, let him consider of it with him-
self*

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self and the consequences thereof, and I am sure he will be very misgiving and suspicious, and struggle mightily with himself at the thoughts of it. I speak not to lessen the fears of those who live in any known sin; if God be true they have great reason to be afraid.

Now here it may be asked, supposing a man brought into extreme danger of his life for the sake of his Religion, in a time of Persecution, one that hath long professed the true Religion, but hath lived very unanswerably to it, and is guilty of many grievous crimes unrepented of, which he is accused by his own conscience for; of a sudden he is commanded to renounce his Faith which in his mind he is verily persuaded is true, and to turn to Idolatry, and to deny and blaspheme his Saviour, or else immediately to suffer death; what must such a one doe now in this case? If he complies with the command, he sins grievously against the light of his mind and his own conscience, and yet by such a compliance he gains time of repentance, to make his peace with God, and to beg his pardon for his crime, and also for all his other sins which he hath so long lived in. If he chuses death, it is that which he is wholly unprepared for, he is utterly unfit to appear before God, and he can expect nothing but to suffer God's vengeance for the sins of an ill-spent life. Now what is to be done in such sad circumstances as these? It is a case that may happen, and therefore to resolve the doubt I shall propound briefly these things to you, viz.

1. In point of duty what this man is bound to doe. This is most certain, that no sin ought to be committed upon any consideration whatever. Their damnation is just, saith the Apostle, that doe evil that good may come, Rom. 3. 8. It is in no case, either justifiable or prudent, to save our lives by any sin. It is every one's duty, nay it is best even for the greatest of sinners, to loose his life a thousand times rather than to deny God or his Truth. And as for gaining time for repentance, it is to be considered that when we are in such a strait, as that we cannot live any longer without sinning directly and grievously against our consciences, it is God's will that we should then die, the time of our repentance is now over, and God by this Providence doth call us out of the world. Now when we will not submit to this call, but will not stick to doe the greatest villany, how can we expect that God should bestow any farther grace upon us, or that his Spirit after such an Apostasie should strive any longer with us. Commonly the effect of such things is a judicial hardness, to be given up to a perverse mind and a reprobate

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probate state. After any one hath in so gross a manner violated his Conscience, there is very little hope that ever he should be again renewed in the spirit of his mind. For persons to have obeyed the truth, and yet in time of persecution fall away, and for fear of death renounce it, the ancient Church, that is to say, a great part would never again receive them into their Communion till their death, and a great division there was among them concerning the restoring those that had once lapsed into Idolatry. What then shall we say to those, who after a wicked life, add to their other sins that of Hypocrisie? They may for a while lengthen out their wretched lives, but it is to be fear'd that they have shut themselves out from all hopes of the means of Grace. It is a very improper and unlikely way in order to attain the pardon of past sins, to commit the greatest we can be guilty of, to renounce our Saviour.

2. In such a case therefore the Sinner is bound to adore the justice of God's Judgment, that by his own gross neglect and carelessness he is brought into such misery, for that he ought to have been always prepared for such a time. Yet however, though he hath highly provoked God, and displeased him to the utmost; yet he will not deny or blaspheme his name, he will not renounce his Saviour, nor disown his profession; he will leave himself to God's infinite mercy, and will die rather than offend him: and such a resolute resignation of himself, such a generous and noble profession of his Faith, how far it may be acceptable with God, and prevail with him is unknown. In such extraordinary instances, God may use extraordinary means in reference to us, and may dispence even with the Rules he hath laid down in the Scripture. Indeed I cannot prove or produce any promise for it, but the example of the Thief on the Cross, who for an extraordinary instance of Faith and Charity, obtain'd more than common grace, I think, and favour. And considering the infinite goodness of God's nature, I should have far more hopes of such a person, that after a wicked life ends his daies bravely and courageously rather than against his Judgment and Conscience, than of a profane, covetous, worldly, unclean Professor, who bewails his sins on a sick bed while he is wrestling with a wasting disease, and hopes by his prayers and good wishes and pious resolutions to obtain his pardon. And this was the sense of the Primitive Church, that an Heathen being converted to Christianity and suffering for it, among other Christians, before he could make a publick Profession of it, or be baptized into it, that he should inherit the reward of Christians, this baptism in his own blood supplying all other defects,
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and expiating all former sins. I say it was the common Opinion of the ancient Fathers, they thought his death carried with it the remission of all past sins. I shall not take upon me to determine this, but thus much I think may be said in the case proposed, that to die for his Religion is the best means such a person can use to obtain his pardon, and does express his repentance to be sure far better than adding the sin of Apostasie to all his others. But to make sure, the best way is to hasten our repentance, and to reform presently, before the floods come, and the winds blow, and the storms rise; by a new life to arm our selves against all the powers and rage of men, and then though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet we need fear no evil. This therefore is as I told you a great reason to fear death.

For death being in truth the greatest of all natural evils that can befall us, there is in all men a natural fear of it, which cannot be wholly rooted out by Religion, nor is it necessary that it should be. If death had not been a natural evil, it had never been threatened nor inflicted on mankind as a punishment for sin. There is in all men a natural dread of it, and we hardly count them worthy the name of men, that are not affected with a due sense of it. And this fear is more or less according to mens tempers. Some are much more timorous than others. To some the circumstances that attend death are much more terrible than death it self. Some fear diseases and pain more than death. Some are loth to die for fear of their Posterity, Friends, Relations, to whom they are usefull, and for whom they are mightily concerned. Some are unwilling to go out of the world because they are in a capacity of doing more good in it, which was the case of St. Paul. On the other hand some are willing to die onely through weariness of life, out of peevishness, discontent and impatience, because they are dissatisfied with their present condition, or cannot bear those afflictions which God's Providence hath exercised them withall; which cannot be reckoned any vertue, unless in them who in their sober minds and thoughts can willingly submit to death, whenever it pleases God to call them to it. And yet such upon a sudden fright or surprise, when their lives are unawares brought into danger, may not be able to conquer their fear, but may shew a great disquiet. They may earnestly desire to tarry a little longer, that they may be yet fitter for death, that they may search and try themselves yet more exactly and curiously; that they may be farther satisfied with the sincerity and honesty of their hearts and intentions. Many more instances I might give.

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But now that which our Saviour frees us from is, a troublesome, tormenting fear of death, which thing alone disturbs us, and fills us with confusion and perplexity of spirit, when ever we chance to think of it. As when we are unreasonably jealous and suspicious of what Trials God's ordinary Providence may put us upon; when we are unmeasurably solicitous about the preserving our health, or securing our selves from danger; when we are concern'd as if we had no hope, and are as unwilling to submit to the stroke of death as a sullen Malefactor is to go to execution. Now such a fear of death is worse than death it self.

I now proceed to shew how Religion does free men from this troublesome and anxious fear of death. And the,

1. Means our Religion affords us to deliver us from this fear is, the consideration of God's wise and gracious Providence over us. Not an hair of our heads shall fall to the ground without his leave. Our lives are in his hands who hitherto hath taken care of us, and whatever he calls us to is with the highest reason, and the most excellent ends, and can we wish any thing better to our selves than this would be, to be under the protection of the Almighty? Would we live longer than infinite Wisdom sees fit for us? Can we doubt of his care who is goodness it self? Would we have the disposal of our own selves? Alas! how soon should we repent us of our choice, and run into all the several casualties and dismal dangers that can fall upon us? If we had nothing to depend on, or trust unto, but our own counsels, prudence or carefulness, we might then have just reason to distrust every man, and to expect death in every place; we could not be too scrupulous or solicitous. Could I in the least doubt of God's Providence over us, then indeed I should neither eat nor sleep safely, nor live one day in quiet; I should not be able to doe any thing without anxiety and disturbance, if I once could persuade my self that all the effects that happen were wholly casual, and not governed by an infinite understanding, that superintends all affairs, and disposes of them as he sees good. Nor is there any thing that can well settle mens minds in the midst of so many secret and open dangers as we are every minute liable unto, in any tolerable patience, rest, quiet and assurance, but this one consideration, that nothing can befall us without the leave and ordering of the best and wisest of Beings. Indeed the Turkish opinion of Fate, which hath strangely prevail'd among Christians, ought in reason to satisfie them against the greatest dangers, that the number of the days of every man living is so determin'd by an unalterable decree, that it is impossible he

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should die before, or out live the time appointed him by God before all the world. This made the Followers of Mahomet, who so studiously taught this Doctrine, to despise death and danger, not to fear it when they were in the extremest hazard of it; freely to visit their Neighbours when sick of the Plague, which we dare not do to one another in any ordinary disease; or to run upon their Enemies swords or Cannons. For what can be strange with those, that are neither concern'd to prolong their lives, nor to avoid death? But this is no part of the Christian Faith. We are told indeed the days of our years are Threescore years and Ten, and if by reason of strength, they be Fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Behold, saith David, Thou hast made my days as an hands breadth. And Job tells us, a man's days are determined, the number of his months are with God, he hath appointed his bounds that he cannot pass, and in another place, that all men have their appointed time. All which signifies no more than this, that God in the general hath set bounds to a man's life beyond which he will not ordinarily extend it; he hath set the term of our lives beyond which we shall not ordinarily extend them, which is about Threescore and Ten years, notwithstanding which some die much sooner, and some few live longer. But the Scripture nowhere teacheth us, that the length of a man's life is so fixed by God that he shall not die before such a time, nor live at all beyond it. Nay, the contrary is plainly intimated to us.

In all those places of Scripture where long life is promised for the reward of obedience in any particular duty, which must imply (if it signify any thing) that we shall live longer than otherwise we should have done. Thus, Honour thy Father and thy Mother: that thy days may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Now this promise can never reasonably oblige any man to the performance of duty to his Parents, if it be absolutely determined how long he shall live. Thus in the 23. Exod. And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread and thy water, and take away sickness from thee; the number of thy days will he fulfill. Not that he promiseth that if they were obedient to his Laws, they should live out the full age of men, and that he would preserve them from sickness and distempers. No, for this were to no purpose, and they could expect no otherwise if they harkened not unto, or disobeyed God's words. So farther, in the 4. Deut. God promises not any should live out their days, but that they should live longer than otherwise they should

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should. Thou shalt keep therefore his Statutes and his Commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy Children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth which the Lord thy God giveth thee for ever.

To wicked men God often threatens sudden and untimely death, that they should die sooner than otherwise they should have done. The fear of the Lord prolongeth (or, as we have it in the Margin, addeth) days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. That is they shall not live so long as otherwise they might have done. Thus many men shall not live out half their days; not half the ordinary time of a man's life. Most observable is the instance of King Hezekiah, in the 38. Isa. to whom the Prophet positively declares; Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live: and yet upon his humble Prayer Fifteen years more were added unto his days, which otherwise he should not have had. From which it plainly appears that by sin and disobedience men may shorten their days and cut off from their lives, and by Piety and Vertue men may procure to themselves a longer life and encrease of days. Now the length or shortness of our lives depends often upon our own voluntary actions, upon our pleasing or displeasing God, which cannot agree with that Doctrine of Fate I before mentioned. Nor do we need any such opinion against the fear of death, because we allow that our life depends upon God's good will and pleasure; that no instruments of death, no ill practices, can prevail against us without his appointment. And this is a sufficient foundation of assurance and confidence, notwithstanding the frailty and uncertainty of our condition here, that the Watchman of Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth; that his eye is always upon us for Good; that we shall live as long and as well as is really best for us, and then who would not be willing to die? But,

Another means our Religion affords us to free us from the fear of death is a deadness to this present world and all the trifling pleasures of it. For it is an over fond love and doating upon the things of this world and sensual enjoyments that makes persons so unwilling to die. The more our appetites and desires are mortified and subdued, the readier we shall be to bid an eternal farewell to all these things below. It is no wonder that those who know no other happiness but what is to be found in these lower Regions, are loth to be torn from their dear possessions, and to venture into a strange Countrey which they have so little knowledge of. But by this contempt of the world
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which our Religion teaches us, we forsake it in the love of it, even whilst we are living, and so our business is better than half done before hand, and we are freed from those worldly cloggs and encumbrances that too often hang on our vertue and most raised affections.

Farther, the Consideration of Christ's conquering death for us gives a mighty encouragement against the inordinate fear of death. For our blessed Saviour hath tasted death for every man and hath taken away its sting, hath quell'd its force and overcome its power, insomuch that he is said to have abolished it. He hath made a way through death and the grave to his Father's Glory, and shall we be afraid like Saint Peter, to profess and follow him wheresoever he goes? Our Prince and Redeemer hath voluntarily passed through it, and shall it grieve us to follow his steps, and to come to him through that passage by which he himself entred into his Kingdom?

Lastly, The hope of salvation is another great means that our Christianity administers to us against this base fear of dying. I have read it is an ordinary saying among the Turks, that if Christians had a right opinion concerning Heaven, they could not be so afraid of death, which is the onely way to life. And it was reasonably asked by the Philosopher of him that promised that all that were of his Sect should be immediately happy as soon as they were dead, why then he did not presently die? Do we really believe a future Glory, and are we afraid to enter into our Master's joy? What, are we Christians, and yet would we live always here? Have we already attain'd all the happiness which we aspire after? Can we be contented to know no more of God, to enjoy no more of his Glory, and to love him no more, than we can doe in this imperfect State? Are we unwilling to receive that reward which we daily pray for? Thou knowest not what thou art capable of, what perfection, what happiness thy soul shall enjoy, freed from this troublesome Tabernacle, this luggage of flesh, and art thou afraid of being translated into the celestial Kingdom? One glimpse of that Glory which our Saviour hath promised to us, would make as all long to be with Christ. No wonder Saint Paul was so ready to die, when he had before hand been rapt up into the third Heaven, and had seen and heard things not utterable. Did we live in the hopes of the future happiness we shall enjoy, we should not value any of the pleasures here below, nor fear to undergo any thing that stood in his way between us and those blessed Mansions of happy Souls, where dwelleth God, and perpetual peace and satisfaction, free from all care and disturbance, from all fear and anxiety, from all pain and danger; where onely is to be found perfect contentment, eternal joy and immortal happiness.

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piness. If Christians perfectly knew the felicity of the other life, they would be impatient of the present; they would be hardly able to brook or endure living, or any thing that detain'd them from such unspeakable enjoyments. Wo unto us therefore, that yet dwell in Melhech, and are forced to abide in the Tents of Kedar. Blessed, yea, thrice blessed, are all those that have passed this miserable world, and are received into the heavenly Mansions; for one day there is better than a thousand elsewhere. One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I still seek after, that I may live for ever with him, and behold his Glory. When shall we arrive at that eternal and celestial happiness, where we shall have no more of these storms and dangers? When shall we pass all fears, and cares, and grief, and troublesome passions? Even so saith the Church, all true Christians and sincere Believers, come Lord Jesus, come quickly, and deliver us from these crazy bodies, and put on us that house that is eternal and in the heavens. Is it so pleasant to us to wander to and fro in this wilderness, and be tossed up and down upon these troublesome waves? And can it be grievous to us to think of arriving at our journey's end? How soon would all the grief and pain and uneasiness that accompanies sickness, and the very pangs of death pass away; when once we have received our Crown? We shall be so taken up with those surpassing joys, that we shall have no leisure to think of what we have undergone; all the troublesome passage will soon vanish. I confess that for men who have no well grounded hopes of eternal life, it is reasonable for them to fear death, as the day of their execution, when they shall receive the just reward of their evil doings. But to you I now speak who profess to have an hope of this blessed immortality; for you it is a shame to be afraid of death. It is for them only to fear death, as one of the Ancients said, who would go to Christ. This is the only thing that makes men take death so heavily, they do not really believe those great things our Saviour hath promised; if they did they would look upon death as the greatest happiness that can befall them. Why art thou then thus cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me? We contradict, at least we disparage our faith, by our fear of death; since it is the Gate that leads into the heavenly City, into the new Jerusalem. We ought rather to entertain the thoughts of it with a smile, and bid it heartily welcome, as the end of all my labour and torment, all my sorrows and cares: as that that would give me a sight of him that dyed for me, and convey me into his armes and embraces who shed his blood for my soul, and carry me into a Kingdom of peace and Righteousness and eternal joy, and would bring me into the company of all
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*the famous Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours and all holy men and women; which will again restore to me the Society of those Friends, Relations, dear Children and Parents, whose loss I have so sadly bemoan'd and restore them again refined from all dross, infinitely more lovely and amiable than ever they were before. Oh! how shall we please our selves when once our souls are disentangled from this lower world? Thou art afraid to go to a strange place, where thou never wert before, and from whence no Friend that is gone thither before hath ever returned to tell thee what it is; but is it not sufficient to know it is our Father's house, our Saviour's Kingdom, a place of uninterrupted joy and happiness? All the afflictions of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be reveal'd. Let us fix in our selves these considerations, and we shall see nothing terrible in death, or think strange of being born into the invisible world; which though it may be attended with some pain and hardship, yet the joy that we are deliver'd from this miserable life will soon make us infinite amends. Nay indeed were there no other advantage, but onely the putting an end to those disquieting fears of death, death it self should be less dreadful to us. In the other life there is no more fear of dying, no diseases can overtake us, we shall be above all the solitudes and troublesome concerns of nature. Inure therefore your minds to this, till it hath reconciled to you the thoughts of death, this is the most happy and perfect state that we can arrive to here, to have as the usual expression is, *Vitam in patientia, mortem in desiderio*, to be content to live, and yet desirous to die, and to enter into the possession of those great things which God hath laid up for those that fear him. Such may find it as hard to be willing to live, as to be desirous of death. Persons affected with a dull sense of immortal happiness, may doubt which is hardest, to bear life or to suffer death. Thus hath our Saviour deliver'd us from this slavish fear of death, by bringing life and immortality to light through the Gospel. And it is all the peace and comfort of our lives to be rais'd above the fear of death.*

THE

T H E
L I F E
O F
Monsieur Claude.

P A R T I.

FRANCIS CLAUDE was a Pastour of great Piety, performing his Office with much Honour in the Churches of *Montbazillac* and *Cours* near *Bergerac* in lower *Guienne*, where he died in his seventy fourth year. He had a Son called *John Claude*, a famous Minister of the Gospel, whose Life I now undertake to write, for the bestowing upon his memory an instance of the Esteem and Affection I had for him, and the gratifying the desire of such as onely knowing him by his Writings, will, as is very natural, be curious to be informed of the principal Circumstances of the Life and Death of this great Man.

B

Monsieur

The Life of Monsieur Claude.

Monsieur *Claude* was born at *Salvetat*, in the year 1618. His Father, being a Lover of Polite Learning, took care of his education during his youth, after which he went to finish his Studies in the Academy of *Montauban*: There did Monsieur *Claude* study Philosophy; his Wit beginning then to find matter to exercise upon, made him quickly distinguish'd from all the other Students in Philosophy; and though he was no harder Student than his Companions, yet the flame of his imagination carried him so far that he made greater progress in that Science in six months than his fellow Students in a year.

After he had accomplish'd his course in Philosophy, he began to study Divinity under *Messieurs Garrisoles* and *Charles*, Professours in that Academy: he more particularly applied himself to Monsieur *Charles*, whose memory he honour'd all his life long. I know not whether the Conformity of these two great *Genius's* might not from that time contract this Union of Hearts; for as Monsieur *Claude* had an Admiration for his Master, we may also affirm, that the Master relish'd the Character of his Disciple; that he lov'd him tenderly, and spake of him as of a young-man of most hopefull expectation.

His Father, being desirous to see him in the Sanctuary, did a little hasten the time of his reception into the Ministry, for he was not full twenty five years old when he was admitted as Minister; he lost thereby the opportunity of travelling, of seeing other Universities, that of *Saumur* especially where were Professours of such vast Learning, and where was to be found that Politeness of Language and Manners as very rarely passes beyond the *Loire*, and which nevertheless was so much his Province.

He was admitted Minister in the Synod of upper *Guienne* and upper *Languedoc*, in the year 1645. he was assigned Minister to the Church at *La Treyne*, his Father was nominated by the Synod to ordain him, and he had this Comfort, which

which is the greatest a man of his Character can receive, Monsieur *Claude* served this Church but one year.

The Synod of upper *Languedoc* benefic'd him with the Church of Saint *Afrique* in *Rovergue*, and this to supply the Place of Monsieur *Martel*; this Church was not considerable for a numerous Congregation, but had had the good fortune of being serv'd by Ministers of Extraordinary merit; Monsieur *Gaches*, who died Pastour at *Paris*, and Monsieur *Martel* Professour of Divinity had there exercised their Ministry, and this little Flock, glorying in those two great Names, imagin'd that, for the keeping up its Fame, it could not doe better than to pitch upon Monsieur *Claude*.

In Sciences, as in War, great Men are not accomplish'd in a day, herein Art as well as Nature requires Time and Industry. Monsieur *Claude* studied hard at Saint *Afrique*, though his Sermons took him up less time than his other Studies, he preaching with great facility; he had a Wit that easily conceived things, a Judgment that did not fail of disposing each Piece in its due place, an Expression so fluent, so easie, so just and so masculine, that People had much adoe to distinguish what he said with meditation, from what he had written. The Church of *Castres*, famous for the honour it had of possessing in its bosome the Officers of the Chamber of the Edict of *Nantes*, and a vast number of other persons of Quality and Learning, intreated Monsieur *Claude* in his passing that way, to give them a Sermon. He preach'd there one Sunday, and fill'd his whole Auditory with Admiration, so far as to give occasion to a very singular Declaration which a very able Man made in favour of him, and which the publick will possibly be glad to be informed of since it redounds to his Honour: A numerous Company were discouraging of Monsieur *Claude*'s Sermon, Ladies there were that spake their opinions, those of the best sense were extremely well satisfied with it, others of the order of those that a little too much mind the Preacher's voice, face and actions,

durst not so openly pass their Verdicts, and staid first to know a worthy person's Judgment then present; I am persuaded they did not expect so smart an answer, when they heard him say, that he could wish with all his heart he had but one Eye, like that Minister, provided he was capable of preaching as well as he. There needed no more to persuade them that he had preached very well, since this Gentleman, who was a person extremely handsome, valued that Sermon at so high a rate.

This Sermon made a strong impression upon Peoples minds, so far that the Officers of the Chamber of the Edict, wanting a Minister, several of them cast their Eyes upon Monsieur *Claude*, but there were motives also, that brought another into the election, the Lot was cast upon these two Pastours; and Providence, that had destin'd Monsieur *Claude* for something greater, depriv'd the Church of *Castres* of the Comfort it would have received from his Ministry.

But if the Church of *Castres* had not the honour of having Monsieur *Claude* for its Minister, it had the pleasure of seeing that he came to chuse a Wife in its bosom, and that it thereby acquired a kind of right over this great man. He there married Mademoiselle *Elizabeth de Malecare*, on the eighth of *November 1648*. the bare choice of a man of that merit speaks in favour of her that was to be his Wife, she came of a very good Family, her Father was Advocate in Parliament; she made good her Birth and the Declaration which Monsieur *Claude* made in her behalf, which will be seen in this History, justifies the esteem and affection he had for her till death.

Monsieur *Claude* serv'd the Church of *Saint Afrique* for the space of eight years, being belov'd by his Flock, known and desir'd by several Churches, esteem'd and honour'd in the Synod of upper *Languedoc*; whereat he was annually present; but amidst all these Blessings he consider'd, as the most pretious, the Birth of a Son which God gave him according to
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his Heart, on *Wednesday* the fifth of *March*, 1653. and who was nam'd *Isaac Claude*, it so fell out at this time that the Church of *Nismes* which was one of the best Churches in *France*, sought within and without the Provinces for a man that could bear the weight of that burthen; a Minister, in short, that was proper for Preaching, for Disputation and the Conduct of a great Flock. Monsieur *Claude's* reputation being spread far and near made them quickly determine upon the choice they were to make; they sent as Deputies to him Gentlemen of the greatest Eminence, that they might not miss their aim; these Gentlemen discours'd him, made him most obliging Offers, and accomplish'd their Design; for he was appointed Minister for their Church by the Synod of upper *Languedoc*.

The Service of this Church was very painfull, the Preaching there every day, the Sick taking up a great deal of the Minister's time; Ecclesiastical matters requiring no less application, Monsieur *Claude* was not startled at this new task; he found time sufficient to accomplish all his duties, the beauty of his *Genius* and his Industry provided for all the occasions of his Flock.

How much soever busied in the common Functions of his Office, he found leisure to begin a Work which he would have finish'd, but for a Disappointment that broke his measures. He was refuting the method of Cardinal *de Richelieu*, when he heard that the Synod of lower *Guienne* had given that employment to Monsieur *Martel*, Professour of Divinity, he would not stand Candidate with his Brother in the Gospel, and the deference he had for the Company, whence he held his Commission, caused him to lay his Pen aside.

As Monsieur *Claude* was born for a Chair of Divinity, and that his Wit naturally turn'd that way, there was always in *Nismes* a considerable number of Students in Divinity so far advanced as to be admitted to make Probationary Sermons, to whom

whom he read Lectures of Divinity ; his way of Teaching was so neat, the matters he explain'd seem'd so well meditated and so happily fitted to the use of the Pulpit and to the understanding of Holy Writ, insomuch that he caused them to make no less progress in the knowledge of Divinity, than in the best Academies ; hence came that great concourse of Divinity-Students ; nay, and there has been seen to come from this kind of Private School Disciples of merit, that made good the Pains of the Master that instructed them.

Monsieur *Claude's* Ministry did too much fructifie in *Nismes* in the opinions of the *Roman* Catholicks ; the rumour of his Reputation daily augmenting, was an importunate sound, that wounded their ears, a certain presage that he would not be long at quiet. And indeed he was snatch'd from that Church by one of those extraordinary ways which People of his Character and singular worth do daily experience ; his knowledge, his steadiness, his zeal, created a jealousy in a man whose sentiments were not so upright as his. Monsieur *Claude* knew that he espous'd the project of our ruine, under the specious veil of an accommodation of Religion ; he openly opposed this design ; he was the Moderatour of a Synod of lower *Languedoc* ; there did he break his measures ; and in that Province dismounted the machine of re-union, which the Court has abandon'd in these latter days, as being of too slow a movement, and that it can more easily effect those ends by other means, there needed no more to fetch Monsieur *Claude* from *Nismes* ; a Decree of Council was intimated to him, by which he was interdicted the exercise of his Ministry throughout the whole extent of the Province of *Languedoc*. He forbore Preaching, and went to Court, being onely supported by his innocency, he there prosecuted his concern for near six months, but all in vain, for the Resolution was already taken, not to revoke the least of any thing that had been done against us ; and more especially to weary out the Ministers who were not pleasing to the Governours of the Provinces. In

In this Journey did he compose that little Tract which answers that of the perpetuity of the faith of the Catholick Church touching the Eucharist ; this was his first Piece that was made publick ; this Tract of his made a noise in the World ; the *Roman* Catholicks were at a loss to know the Authour's Name ; the *Jansenists* who felt the weight of the blow, would needs know the hand from whence it departed ; but all the pains they took in order to this discovery were for a long while all in vain, and we may say that as they have laugh'd at the uneasiness the *Jesuits* had been under to find out the Authour of the Provincial Letters, they in their turns made this occasion their diversion, as did many other People who were not sorry to see an Authour stand forth, who allur'd that party by a Work of thirty Pages.

This little Tract did Monsieur *Claude* so much honour, that it well deserves we enlarge a little upon it, and the particular Circumstances that it affords, will reward the Reader for the time he may bestow upon what we are going to say of it.

The Tract of the Perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholick Church touching the Eucharist, compos'd by an able *Jansenist* believed to be Monsieur *Arnaud*, had Monsieur de *Turenne* in view, the Court had the same aim in perswading him to change his Religion, and the *Jansenists* espousing this design hop'd to acquire honour by this Conquest ; but as he was a Prince, who without playing the Divine had a right sense to judge whether the Argument was good or bad, it was necessary to chuse a matter that was beyond the common reach of his Lights in Religion, and to pass his understanding, by drawing him into the vast fields of antiquity ; as being a region proper to impose upon Strangers and new Comers, who do not well know the Map of that Countrey. No fitter Subject for a trepan could have been chosen than that pitch'd upon by this Authour ; he pretended to prove that the Doctrine of the Real Presence, had been the constant

stant Faith of the Church, till the time of the Reformation, (a great prepossession in *France*, for a heart that wish'd for a Religion that accommodated it self with his fortune) the turn which this Writer took was very ingenious; how (said he) a thousand years of a peaceable possession, and a profound silence do they not sufficiently justify the Faith of the Church upon this Article? it peaceably enjoy'd its right till *Beranger*; and as soon as this man offer'd to open his mouth to combat this truth, all rose up against him, and he was condemn'd by the first Council held at *Rome* by Pope *Leo* the Ninth, in the year 1053. Before him none had combated the Real Presence, therefore it was the universal Sentiment of the Church.

This Authour does still something more, for to the proof of the matter he adds that of right, that is to say, that he means to prove, that if the Church had been of the Protestants opinion it would have made so sensible an alteration in Christendom, when it chang'd its belief upon this Article, and ~~then~~ fell into the Faith of the Real Presence, that there is not an individual, but would have been sensible of this Innovation, seeing the thing could not fail of being so of it self; Nevertheless he is persuaded, that none ever complain'd of upon this account; whence he infers that no change has been made in the Doctrine; nay, and that this change is not even possible after the manner we conceive it; this ingenious method affected Monsieur *de Turenne*; he found in this reasoning an air of truth of too large extent for his knowledge; his doubts were known, and persons of the first Quality and of an exemplary Piety endeavoured to disperse these elusions; they cast their eyes upon Monsieur *Claude* who was then at *Paris*; he would not oppose what they desir'd of him, because he found himself thereunto engag'd by the sense of his Conscience, and by the respect he had for the persons who required his assistance; thus he writ, and this was the true occasion of that Dispute.

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Monsieur *Claude* understood very well that this was but an ill way to make his Court for his restoration to the Church of *Nismes*, but he did not stand wavering, what course to take; he saw that he was going to enter the lists with a Writer of mighty name, he hop'd that God wou'd give him the grace to maintain his Cause. Messieurs *Blondel* and *Aubertine*, whose Writings were to be defended, were Authours consummated in the study of the Fathers; they seem'd to have exhausted the matter which Monsieur *Claude* undertook to treat of; if we find that he sometimes walks in their steps, we shall also see that he makes new discoveries, and his manner of handling this subject is so fine, sensible and strong, that we may affirm it to be a method wholly new, whereof Monsieur *Claude* is the first Authour: in short, as he had tryed the strength of his *Genius*, he was sensible of an air of confidence, which arose from the strength of the truth he was going to defend; this was his disposition when he began to write upon this matter. His Answer is short, but it is the fullest and closest Work that had till then been seen upon this Subject; the Authour speaks little, but says a great deal in few words; and the Hypotheses which he states are so well meditated, so just, back'd with such good reason, that there is no staggering them, whatever onset has been made upon them; nay, and we shall find that all the trains of this great Dispute are so many lines that depart from that center, and which after divers illustrations and long evasions return thither as to their true Principle.

Monsieur *Claude* undertakes to prove in his Answer, that this change termed a *chimera*, and look'd on as a thing impossible, did effectually happen; he shews the time, manner and principal Authours that favour'd it; he makes appear how easie it is to alter a Point of Doctrine when those three things concur together, as has been seen in that of the Eucharist; first, when it is under-hand attacqu'd, and by way of explication, still retaining the same terms, conse-

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crated by a long use to that tenet ; secondly, when this innovation does not alter any thing in the worship ; and thirdly, when the errour finds a happy age wherein to spread its darkness: He proves so well that these three things have concurr'd in the change of belief, upon the subject of the *Eucharist*, that all his reasons are as so many demonstrations, against which there is no offering any thing, that can weaken the proof of them.

The Authour of the little Tract of *the perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholick Church, touching the Eucharist*, hath acted in this Debate as shrewd men do, who have nice concerns to defend in the Courts of Justice, for though you produce against them a vast number of Witnesses, considerable both for their Worth and their Dignity, they plainly perceive that the onely way to Ward off the Blow that wou'd otherwise destroy them, is to endeavour to invalidate the proof by reproaches good or bad, which robs these witnesses of all Credit ; and thus you have a vast field open to contempt, to foul language, and imposture : Nay, and we have seen such as by a cunning slight suggested to them by their danger, endeavour to derive advantage from the testimony that has been urg'd against them, however opposite it may be to their Justification, and this is much the Character of that Authour. Monsieur *Claude* understood his design very well, he trac'd him exactly through all his windings, and as it highly behov'd him to maintain the Dignity, Integrity, and Authority, of the testimonies which Messieurs *Blondel* and *Aubertine* had produc'd, we may affirm, that he did it with all the evidence, and all the strength that can be desir'd in a disputation of that nature, which turn'd much more upon matters of fact, than upon questions of right.

Monsieur *Claude*, having not been able to get the Prohibitions taken off that had been exhibited against his officiating his Pastourship in *Nismes*, or in any other Town of *Languedoc*, departed from *Paris* after six months abode in that Town,

Town, and repair'd to *Montauban*; certain it is that he had not then any settlement in his mind, as seeing no appearance for it, yet did he live much at his ease, though he was not altogether unconcern'd at the Troubles he was made to suffer, he overcame them by submitting himself with an absolute resignation to the Providence of God, and this course of submission to the Decrees of Heaven, which is ever the best, did not fail to prosper with him; he had not the trouble of wishing or of being tyr'd with expectation of seeing his desires accomplish'd, the Church of *Montauban* prevented him, and gave him not leasure to solace himself after the hardship of a long Journey, he arrived there on the Saturday, preach'd on the Sunday following, being Communion day. The Church assembled for his Vocation, a Place was offer'd him, he accepted it, and the Synod authoris'd the choice of the Church. He had serv'd eight years the Church of *Nismes*, when he settled in that of *Montauban*, where he staid but four years, but with so much delight, that I have heard him often say that that time compos'd the sweetest and happiest period of his Life. He there liv'd in a perfect Union with his Collegues, being cherisht and esteem'd by his Church, and being charm'd with the Beauties of that Climate, which he look't upon as his second place of Nativity having there perform'd his Studies.

There did he compose his answer to the *second Tract of the perpetuity of the Faith of the Eucharist*, but did not imagine that the Manuscript he had left at *Paris*, wou'd one day become a subject of Disputation, because it was onely made for the instruction of Monsieur *de Turenne*, who declar'd himself to be satisfied with it; nevertheless this Work was three years after taken to task, and the Authour of the *perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholick Church, touching the Eucharist* made an answer thereunto.

For a long time not any Book about Religion had been seen in *France*, that made somuch noise as this, the Au-

thour not onely attackt the ashes of a dead person that are seldom fear'd, as he had done in his former Tract, which slightly ran over the Book of Monsieur *Aubertine*, he knew he had to doe with another Authour, who was not to be slighted, which inspir'd him with a design of writing after a more finewey and more elaborate manner. Whether the event prov'd answerable to his good intentions is a point which I leave the Readers to judge of; it onely appears as to me that Monsieur *Claude* was not of that opinion, and that if he found more art in the second Tract than in the former, more wit and more care to conceal the weakness of the matter, which the Authour therein defends, yet did he not therein observe the more solidity. He saw in it somewhat less sincerity, and eruptions of mind against persons of merit and probity, to whom the publick has not done the same Justice as this Authour.

To remain mute when the whole Kingdom speaks, such silence seem'd affected to Monsieur *Claude*, the *Roman Catholics* said openly, that this last Book made their cause triumph, and that it would not be answer'd; the *Protestants* did not speak with so much arrogance though they had much greater confidence, being necessitated to curb their sentiments, when they were treated with ill Language; and to make semblance of fearing Books, that did not perplex them much at the bottom, and this piece was of that rank. Monsieur *Claude* ventur'd the repose of his Life by answering it, the event did but too well justifie him, he nevertheless determin'd to maintain his first Tract, by refuting the Book which made so much noise at that time, and this is the piece bearing the Title of, an answer to the second Tract of the perpetuity of the Faith of the Eucharist, this work is of a much larger bulk than the former, though it turns much upon the same principles; it was necessary to be more particular in Citations, in the choice of proofs, in the order and light wherein they were to be set, and the consequences

sequences that are to be thence derived, and this course is perhaps what is most difficult in a disputation of the nature of this under our consideration. Monsieur *Claude* knew it very well, and on that account, did he contrive a method painfull for himself, but easie and usefull for his Readers, he onely took what was most essential in the passages of the Fathers, and which was serviceable to his Subject; he says not too much for fear of wearying out attention; he says sufficient to illustrate his matter; the Arguments he brings upon these testimonies are short, but perswasive, whether that he backs his own cause, or attacks that of the Church of *Rome*, and because it is a subject containing ungratefull matter by reason of the same expressions of the Ancients, which are often reiterated in this kind of conflict. Monsieur *Claude* thought fitting to enliven his matter with a gayety of discourse, yet without deviating from the Character of a wise and Majestick Writer.

The Authour of the Treatise of the *Eucharist*, made it matter for his Diversion, one while to insult our cause whose weakness he deplores, another while our Reformers whom he speaks of with extreme contempt, and sometimes Monsieur *Claude* himself, looking on his demonstrations as petty elusions, which vanish at the approach of his lights: I know not whether he imagin'd when he meditated his common place of Metaphors, that Monsieur *Claude* wou'd sleep upon that passage; he was certainly mistaken if he had that opinion: Monsieur *Claude* found out the weakness of it, makes merry with it in more than one place, as well as at that method of the Authours, of putting proofs into objections, and objections into proofs. He commends his judicious silence, which makes him pass quick over the greatest Difficulties, and his Prudence that makes him dwell, upon things that seem the most easie. This is what Monsieur *Claude* calls in the conduct of the Authour, an affectation of speaking in a Slumber, so to lull us asleep by his own Example.

Example. There are places indeed, where he does not seem to be in his wonted good humour, and this is when he cannot bear what Writers of that Communion call *Pious frauds*, I mean the manifest alterations, which the Authour makes of some passages, as to the sense, the terms and expressions, one is in the *Homily* of the *Eucharist* for consecration attributed to St. *Chrysostom*, though it be none of his, the other is taken from *Luke Anacorete*.

Fame, which delights in magnifying Objects, quickly gave the alarm among the *Jansenists*, a secret rumour was spread about *Paris*, that the unknown Authour, was answering this second Tract of the *Eucharist*. The main body detach't some of its Emissaries, to find out whence this News came, and in what part of the Earth this hardy Minister liv'd, who came to disturb the Glory of such as had the Vogue of being the most Learned and most Polite Writers of *France*; some of them brought back word, that the Authour they were in quest of was Monsieur *Claude*: This was a sufficient intimation to those Gentlemen, for them to take their measures; they wrote to the Bishop of *Montauban*, a Prelate eminent at that time for his Sermons, which the Court had relish't, and for the engagements he had had with the *Jansenists*; they entreated him to know whether Monsieur *Claude* was writing, to see his Papers if possible, and to acquaint them with the intent of them. This Prelate sped according to their desires, Monsieur *Claude* had been oblig'd to see him, he was known by him, if I dare say it, esteem'd, a thing rare in *France*, considering that immense distance, which is presum'd to be between the height of an Episcopal Crozier, and the bare crook of one of our Pastours. My Lord Bishop entreated Monsieur *Claude* to tell him, whether it was true, that he was answering Monsieur *Arnaud*, for so was the style at that time, that he wou'd doe him a very sensible kindness in letting him see his answer. Monsieur *Claude* thinking it did not become him to deny a thing, which

which he did not at first think to be of consequence, he promis'd to let him see some of his Copy, and accordingly perform'd what he promis'd.

The Bishop of *Montauban* did not fail to inform his friends, of what he had seen, and to let them know that this answer was Printing at *Paris*, under the direction of a person of Merit, who did that good Office to Monsieur *Claude* his particular Friend: I know not how far the reflexions of that Prelate did proceed; in a short time we saw orders come from Court, that snatcht him away from the Church of *Montauban*, his Friends did not doubt but that his merit had made him incur this new Disgrace; he obey'd these the King's Orders, as he had obey'd those that had taken him from *Nismes*, and not finding any safe Sanctuary in the Provinces, he resolv'd to go lay open his conduct to the Eyes of the Court, that judges much better by its own lights, than when it was oblig'd through the great distance of places to trust to the lights of others.

On the same day that he arriv'd at *Paris*, he had the dissatisfaction to hear, that a stop was put to the impression of his Book; but though this trouble attended him to Bed, when he wak't again, he was complemented with better tidings, for the very next Morning after his arrival, he had notice that the Prohibitions relating to his answer, had been read, and that it was allow'd the liberty of the Press, that Spirit of intrigue, that intrudes into all humane concerns, wou'd needs force the experience of its good and ill humour upon his Book. The *Jansenists* are said to have endeavour'd to have put a stop to its Sale by their Credit, which as then was so considerable, but the *Jesuits* through other principles, very contrary to the former, did bring again the course of this concern into its natural Chanel; a remarkable example of the vanity of the thoughts of men, and of the depth of the designs of the Providence of God, who knows how to derive his Glory from the good and ill dispositions of
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their minds. This second answer of Monsieur *Claude's*, had all the success he cou'd desire; the *Protestants* made it the Buckler of their Cause, the *Roman* Catholicks found it very dangerous, and if the *Port Royal* found therein matter of Vexation, other people more complying than they, were not much concerned at the consequences. The progress of Monsieur *Claude's* sentiments in this Book extended very far, he render'd the change of belief as to the *Eucharist*, too sensible, every Individual that reads his reasons, had a sense of this alteration, and to stop the course of it, they bethought themselves of giving out that the citations of the passages of the Fathers were not faithfull; and as these Gentlemen among their people are in possession of being believ'd upon their bare word, it was absolutely necessary, for the dispersing this false accusation, that Monsieur *Claude* should Print, all at length, the passages he had cited, and this is what will be found in the seventh Edition, that was made of that answer in the year 1668. The work was large, but the Volume might still have been enlarg'd, by a considerable number of other passages, which I have seen Written by the late Monsieur *Claude's* own hand, which is in the Margent of that second answer which is in his Closet.

Monsieur *Claude* staid near Nine Months in *Paris*, being uncertain of his Fate; without being able to break through the barrières, that hinder'd his return to *Montauban*. This was an Episcopal case, and these causes were so priviledg'd, that a Body was ever sure of loosing the process that one had with those Personages; Monsieur *Claude* understood it so too, and with submission and patience arm'd himself against all these hardships.

During this interval, he was courted by the Church of *Bourdeaux*, but *Charenton* had people of too much sense, to suffer their being rob'd of a man of such great merit, who was already among them, they let him have some intimation of the design which that Church entertain'd. A regard

gard was to be had to the inclinations of the Court, the matter was insensibly prepar'd, and as soon as they saw a propitious moment, for Monsieur *Claude's* calling into the Church of *Paris*, they took him, and he was effectually call'd to serve that Flock in the year 1666.

P A R T II.

IF Monsieur *Claude's* Books made so much Noise in *Paris*, when he was an hundred Leagues distant, 'tis easie to judge that he was much more talk't of when it came to be known, that he was to make his constant abode in that Town, in order to serve the Church that met at *Charenton*. I know not after what manner the *Port Royal* did receive the News, and whether those Gentlemen, seeing that this Learned Minister fixt his residence in that great City, did not think of him what skilfull Politicians say of a Prince that settles himself in *Italy*, that it was an ill prospect, and an Eye-fore; be it as it will, it does not appear, that they stir'd in the least to traverse this calling, it was not unknown at Court, and this was sufficient for Monsieur *Claude*.

A discourse there was of an answer, of the Authour of *the perpetuity of the Faith*, to Monsieur *Claude's* second Book, he very quietly expected its coming out; however it did not appear for some time, which is a mystery I have no design to shrift into, it no ways availing my Subject, and 'tis sufficient, that I say how that another Writer stood forth to supply Monsieur *Claude's* Adversaries room, but I am as yet a Stranger, whether t'was out of kindness to Monsieur *Arnaud*; great men are not over fond of such kind

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of Assistance, as being willing to distance from them all that can inculcate the least suspicion of humane weakness. But to what purpose all this, when people have diligent Friends, they prevent us whether we will or no, and it is a kind of Civility, which we should not dare to complain of. This Dispute made too much Noise, to leave a Society at rest, that presumes it has a right to decide upon all matters, its Emulation was rous'd, and for fear any other shou'd gain the Victory, it immediately caus'd one of its Champions to enter the Lists, to rob Monsieur *Arnaud* of the Crown he already laid hold of, and which he is said onely to have lost, by being too much a *Formalist*. Father *Noüet* a Jesuite wrote against Monsieur *Claude*, and they did not stay for the Printers being at work upon the first Leaf, for the giving it approbation; all concur'd towards the speedy stopping the Progresses this second answer made, and Father *Noüet's* Book was put forth with all expedition as a happy dike in opposition to this torrent.

This Father *Noüet's* work has its Beauties and its goodness, like those actions of great consequence, which at the Bar defend an ill cause with a great deal of art; a vast knowledge of Antiquity, though little back't by truth, a design of writing Gentleman like, but most commonly unseasonably us'd, being sometimes travers'd by the bare heat of Disputation, and for the sake of the cause he defended.

Monsieur *Claude* might handsomely have forborn answering this Book, as being to face Monsieur *Arnaud*, who only seem'd to require time for writing, that he might collect all his Forces, and overwhelm him with his last stroke; nevertheless he past over these difficulties, and making it a point of Honour still to maintain this Dispute, against an able Doctor chosen by the most Learned Society of the Church of *Rome*, he answer'd Father *Noüet's* Book, and this is the third work of his composing upon this important matter.

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This answer was Monsieur *Claude*'s favourite Book, he spoke of it modestly in the main, which indeed was his Character, but there was nevertheless to be observed in his Discourses, a fondness for this compofure, and I have known deserving persons, that were of the same opinion with him upon this point. The Preface to this Book is admirable, and affords a most noble Idea of the Authour's design.

Monsieur *Claude* had occasion in this Dispute to follow a Tract, which Monsieur *Arnaud* had diverted him from. Father *Noüet* thought fitting to upbraid him in some manner, for having abandon'd the holy Writ in this controverſie, this Accuſation is curious falling from a *Jefuit*'s Pen. Monsieur *Claude* did not fail to turn it to his advantage, it gave him occasion to explain to us, the ſixth Chapter of the Goſpel according to St. *John*; it was requiſite, that ſatisfaction ſhou'd be given to a perſon that complain'd of a Miniſters neglecting the word of God; the Tract of the uſe of the ſenſes is an accompliſh'd piece, nothing has been ſeen ſo well meditated upon that matter, as what he ſays of it, nothing ſo pat or ſo happy as the application he makes of it. As for the paſſages of the Fathers, which this Authour produces againſt them, he rids himſelf of them like an able and gallant man; for when Father *Noüet* produces very improperly againſt him, Authours poſterior to *Pascatus*, he chuſes them out in the Centuries 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. Monsieur *Claude* does not fail to tell him, that theſe are improper pieces, and witneſſes that bear their recuſation in their Forehead; but he does nevertheless often examine his paſſages, wherein he finds a ſenſe quite oppoſite to Father *Noüet*'s deſign. The opinions of the *Greeks* touching the *Eucharist* is likewise brought in play. Monsieur *Claude* answers it, and upon that point, acquaints him with more than one Hiſtory which he knew not, or which he was minded to diſſemble, becauſe it did not favour his cauſe. This Authour is not ever happy in his citations, as not being

willing to take the pains of going to the Fountain head ; ours complains of his neglects ; Father *Noüet* is hardy, and makes no scruple of often altering passages. Monsieur *Claude* has much adoe to be moderate upon this point ; he exclaims sufficiently, so as that the Reader may be advertis'd of the Snare that is laid for him. Never did Authour know how to avail himself better of the advantages that are offer'd him, if Father *Noüet* speaks of reading of the Fathers, as of a vast Forest, our Authour draws thence an argument, that *Christian* Faith is less involv'd in holy Writ, than in Tradition, which is a Woody Countrey by a Jesuits own confession ; when this Writer is angry at the Primitive Ages of the Church, to which Monsieur *Claude* wou'd bring him back, that he says they have given us more Martyrs

* p. 432.

* than Writers and Doctours ; our Authour derives an advantage from his ill humour, and shews the reason why the Church of *Rome* refuses this Testimony, if Monsieur *Claude* sets Monsieur *Arnaud* against Father *Noüet*, it is without any design of setting them at odds, 'tis through the silence of the *Pagans* in respect of Transubstantiation, and the adoration of the *Eucharist* ; Monsieur *Arnaud* denies that any proof can be drawn from their silence, and adds, that they have perhaps written Books upon this Subject, that have not been transmitted to us. Father *Noüet* on the contrary maintains, that Monsieur *Claude's* consequence wou'd be just, if the *Pagans* had not upbraided the *Christians* with the difficulties of that mystery, but he fancies that he proves it clearer than the day, and this is another point which our Authour does not agree with him in, refuting very plainly the passages urg'd by Father *Noüet*, and maintaining his first Thesis ; in short, though Father *Noüet* had not perhaps a set design, here to combat Monsieur *Claude's* opinion as to the time of the change, that was made in point of the *Eucharist*, he cou'd not with honour forbear saying something of it towards the end of his Book.

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Forc'd he was to bear this little torture, in favour of the devoutest Zealots of his Communion, who wou'd have thought all had been lost if he had fail'd of maintaining a circumstance which so far influences the goodness of that cause; but as he gives this matter onely a transitory touch, Monsieur *Claude* does not enlarge upon this Subject, but nevertheless says sufficient to refute Father *Noëlet*'s illusions, and to back the good reasons he alledg'd in the two former Writings.

This Monsieur *Claude*'s answer * was kindly receiv'd; the *Protestants* found therein the confirmation of their Faith, the *Jansenists* were not sorry, that Father *Noëlet* had made this diversion in favour of them, being so much time gain'd to take breath, and the *Jesuits* on whom all people had their eyes fixt, came off sparkishly from this affair; they talkt of Father *Noëlet* as of one of their adventurers, that had pusht hard at his Enemy, and came off from the conflict honour'd with some wounds. This disputation had no ill consequence, I mean that the Advocate of the *Protestant* party was set aside, and treated more handsomely by the Society of the *Jesuits*, which commonly are not of a humour to suffer much, than he had been by the caball of *Port Royal*.

After this attaque a kind of suspension of Arms lasted for some time; Monsieur *Claude* wanted not Employment, the bare business of his Pulpit at *Charenton*, requir'd the whole application of an ordinary Minister. This Church was so celebrated of it self, and honour'd with the presence of so many Foreigners, that it had been imprudence in a Minister, to have Preach'd unprepared. Thus the bare Office of Preaching was a Province of Pains sufficient for Mr. *Claude*, who was desirous to edifie his Flock, answer the hopes that people did conceive of him, and follow the steps of his Eminent Collegues. He Printed but few Sermons, as being more taken up with other matters, which more concern'd the publick. We may nevertheless judge by those he has
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* p. 1658.

Publisht, that his Talent lay no less for Preaching than for the Closet, and I hope his Son will Print a small Tract, which his Father did compose of the manner of explaining the holy Writ in the Pulpit, so just and so fine, that upon reading it, people will be thoroughly perswaded, that Monsieur *Claude* was a great Master in that matter.

Monsieur *Claude* did not onely signalize himself by his Writings, he was in a Station, that had great influences, to shed over the other reform'd Churches of *France*. *Paris* was the Fountain whence proceeded all the mischiefs, that overwhelmed the *Protestants* in the Provinces, and *Charenton* the place whither they repair'd for Council, an excellent remedy in it self, so sharp, violent and obstinate were the ill humours. Monsieur *Claude* consider'd of this, he acted, he rous'd up others by his own example, though he cou'd not wholly remedy the mischiefs of so many that were afflicted, and who from far and near required his assistance, we may say that he mitigated their trouble, by partaking therein himself and by his consolations. Monsieur *Arnaud's* Book came out at length, being entituled *the perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholick Church, touching the Eucharist, defended*. Monsieur *Claude* thought himself bound to answer it; this work of Monsieur *Arnaud's* made a noise in the World, it having certain Characters fit to excite the admiration of people, who onely floridly touch upon matters, to acquire quickly, and easily the quality of Learned. Monsieur *Arnaud* handles a Subject that might pass in some manner for new at *Paris*, because no *French* Writer had yet been seen, that had collected so many testimonies, and that like him had so profoundly argued about the Religion of the *Greeks*; this air of Novelty did much set off his Book; he cited passages which seem'd to bear all the marks of the real presence, according to the *Roman* Mode. A prodigious reading was observed in his answer. This great work, inspir'd happy prepossessions in favour of the Authour; In short, though
Monsieur

Monsieur *Arnaud* had in his other works spoke with a Majestical tone, yet he now raised his Voice much higher, he lookt so big when he spoke of Monsieur *Claude*, and handles his Books with so much arrogance, that it was a kind of torrent, which without examination hurried away the suffrages of those easie Judges, that are determined by the bare accent of the Voice.

Monsieur *Claude* had not the same assistance as Monsieur *Arnaud*, the latter being said to have had Friends, and such as furnisht him with proofs. Monsieur *Claude* cou'd have wisht, that the same thing had been done for him, but that this requir'd a happy leisure, a privilege out of date at *Charenton*, and granted onely to the Ecclesiasticks of *France*. In default of his Friends, he was forc'd to make it out in his own person. I shou'd not dare to insert the number of travels he read, what is seen of them in his answer, is but the least part of them. People often read several Books in hopes of finding something, that may be serviceable to the Subject we have in our mind, and we find nothing less than what we are in quest of. Those kind of relations being very subject to this imperfection; nevertheless a Writer cannot dispence himself from this fruitless labour, when he is engag'd in a disputation of the nature of this, which turns upon matters that are to be defended or opposed.

Monsieur *Claude* states principles that are a mighty help to disperse all the elusions of Monsieur *Arnaud*, he shews that the business in this dispute, is not to know exactly, what the *Greeks* believ'd in the matter of the *Eucharist*, but what they do not believe; and 'tis in this rank that he places the Transubstantiation of the Church of *Rome*, and the sovereign adoration which the *Latines* pay the *Eucharist*. He draws up a platform of the *Greek Church*, which is as it were the key of that matter, for he shews that there are several *Greek Churches*, that entertain Communion with the Church of *Rome*, and that it is not among them, that we are to go seek
for

for truths; he also justifies, that there is a great number of Seminaries in *Greece* and in the *East* where Youth is brought up in the Faith of the Church of *Rome*, and that thence are taken Priests, Bishops, and sometimes Patriarchs who are *Latines* in Faith, and *Greeks* onely in Ceremonies; Money, fear and other motives do often bring those *Roman* Doctors, drest up after the *Greek* Mode, to the Principal Pulpits of those wretched Provinces, where heavy ignorance does obtain; after which it is no difficult matter to derive such testimonies as one pleases from those missionaries who owe the Pope all they have, and who require nothing more for acknowledgment of his favours, than Paper and Ink. These are the points which Monsieur *Claude* does make most evidently plain, from the testimony of several Writers most worthy of credit. In short, Monsieur *Claude* makes out the opinion of the true *Greek* Church, that is engag'd neither by love nor fear with the Church of *Rome*, that then it speaks clearly of the Faith concerning the *Eucharist*, wherein you neither find the *Roman* Transubstantiation or adoration; with these maxims Monsieur *Claude* refutes all Monsieur *Arnaud's* arguments, he unravels the intrigue of the testimonies he produces, he puts his Readers in a way of doing the like with himself, and there is no using any evasion but what this excellent matter provides against. For it serves to answer all that Monsieur *Arnaud* has said upon this Subject, and shews you what course to take for the illustrating all the objections that might be made hence forward upon this matter. This was

Monsieur *Claude's* fourth answer * upon this dispute, the publick did him Justice in this, as it had done him in the other, it visibly appear'd that his Adversary granted him the principal question, which was the belief of the *Latine* Church, in the matter of the *Eucharist* till the time of *Pascasius*; Monsieur *Claude* had strongly prov'd, that till then the real presence, Transubstantiation, and the adoration of the Host were unknown Doctrines to the

* p. 1671.

the *Latine Church*; Monsieur *Arnaud* thought fitting to dispute no longer upon this point, and to give the change, he contriv'd to lead Monsieur *Claude* and the Reader into the *East*. Monsieur *Claude* could willingly have been without this walk, but having undertaken to cure a person of his errors, he was to be follow'd every where, that so he might dissipate his illusions; after which Monsieur *Claude* having all to no purpose exhausted all the secrets of his art, thought it became him to abandon this cure, and to leave it wholly to the sole immediate grace of God, who cures when he pleases, the most inveterate ills, and that seem the most incurable.

I have been longer than I thought upon this dispute of Monsieur *Claude's* and Monsieur *Arnaud's*, but as it is what made most noise, I thought it requisite to give a pretty exact Idea of it, that it might make an impression upon the Readers mind. I shall be shorter in his other works, and shall thereby endeavour a little to recreate such peoples minds, as were tir'd out by the uniformity of this matter, and who love novelty and conclusion.

The desire of being an Authour, is an uneasie passion, since Monsieur *Arnaud* did not come again into play, another Writer did not tarry long, before he suppli'd his room; he wrote against our Reformation in a very bitter style, he attackt Monsieur *Claude*, he pointed him out by his name, this Book is intitl'd *Legitimate prepossessions against the Calvinists*; 'tis no longer a matter of Doctrine that is undertaken to be handled, the success of the dispute of the *Eucharist*, had not been happy for the *Port Royal*, another course was to be taken, and we to be attackt in a place proper for declamations, for calumny and the contempt of our Religion. The Authour of these prepossessions could not have chosen better, he there found wherewithall to satisfie his spleen against our Reformers, whom he loads with opprobrious Language. This was a large Field for to excite the

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peoples hatred against us, by renewing without any necessity, those sad Ideas of our ancient quarrels, which charity ought to have buried in an eternal forgetfulness. This fine and crafty policy, which those Gentlemen make profession of uniting with morals plain and free from all worldly interests, found here a fair occasion of displaying their maxims at Court, where people were not over well satisfied with some of their works; the point of favour was to be weather'd again, by speaking of us and our Religion, after so odious a manner, as that it might make impression upon the most moderate minds, and through this prospect did Monsieur *Nicole* write that work, and that's its true Character.

Monsieur *Claude* answer'd it, but he was far from following that Authour's violent method, he found it so contrary to the spirit of Christianity, contented himself with shewing its poisonous passages, but he does not make them rebound upon his adversaries head, thinking it sufficient that he renders them of no use, and destroys them before his eyes, and for ought I know, this is a greater mortification for that Authour, than if he had engag'd him after a less civil manner.

Monsieur *Claude* gives us the Portrait of the *Latine* Church before the Reformation, there is not one sole stroke in it of his own hand, for he makes onely use of the testimonies of *Roman* Catholick Authours. This caution was necessary on the account of the niceness of the piece, and to avoid the suspicion of falsehood. The idea he gives us of the Church at that time is so sad, that there is no need of opening ones eyes, to judge that it wanted reformation. Monsieur *Claude* proves that it was desir'd, that it was eagerly demanded before our Reformers set about it, but he likewise shews the evasions which the Court of *Rome* used to elude this proposition, and the little likelihood there was of the Clergy's entring upon so holy a project. After
having

having shew'd the necessity of the Reformation, Monsieur *Claude* proves that our Reformers, might goe to work upon weeding the Field of the Lord, and that they were forc'd thereunto by their own interest, and by the engagement they were under, of furthering the Salvation of their Brethren. He answers those petty objections of the missionaries, which the Authour of the prepossessions does pompously display, he shews that there is no arguing directly against a doctrine, or in its behalf, by the bare examination of the lives of those who teach it, that the consequence is much more natural, and more sure to pronounce for or against a Religion; after having examin'd its belief, he explains some of *Luther's* expressions that seem too rude, he speaks of that Authour as a Hero, because he really exerted an Heroick constancy, but he will not warrant all his frailties; he is satisfi'd with shewing that the greatest men are subject unto failings, and by this means does he shelter some of our Reformers, over whose lives the Authour of the Prepossessions was minded to vent his spleen. The distinction of this Authour is curious, he says that there may be in the Church a negative separation, that onely consists in abstaining from the practice of Doctrines that we do not believe; he is of a pretty temporizing humour, by insinuating that it would not have been ill contriv'd in our Fathers, had they onely proceeded so far, but he cannot pardon them the positive separation, which is properly what is called set apart; it appears plainly that this Authour's maxims do not pass for Standard truth at this day, when there wou'd be so fair an occasion to put them in practice. Many unhappy persons are there, who wou'd thank this Authour if he cou'd procure them the enjoyment of that negative separation whereof he speaks, till such time as we find the results which nature, reason and faith do presuppose. But perhaps the things wou'd go too far, if so great a complaisance was had for this negative, for there is found much

less danger in seeing the mysteries profan'd, than in giving the least suspicion, that the number of the true Converts was not very great. This Authour makes a mock of us with his distinction, for besides that, a good Conscience with this worldly management in matter of Religion, the little support there is at this day from the *Roman Church*, for those that do not relish its tenets, and the racks which on this account it puts on their minds and their hearts, induce us to believe, that the same maxims wou'd have been practis'd upon our Fathers at the time of the Reformation, and that they would not have spar'd the negative separation.

Our Authours would have written upon this matter, for the Church of *Rome* has never ceas'd exclaiming, that the calling of our Pastours was not Legitimate, and all that has followed that ill principle, could not have any character of Justice and goodness. The Libraries are full of Books, that have been written by Doctours of both Parties, but this Monsieur *Claude's* work is the best that has been seen upon this Subject. Possibly time having given occasion to new objections, has likewise furnish'd Monsieur *Claude* with the occasion of making new discoveries in this matter, but what is particular, and which is a result of the beauty of his Genius, is that he writes with so much clearness, states his principles so well, and with so much exactness makes the application of them to the Ministry of the *Protestants*, that we are immediately sensible of the necessity of their consequences. Thus for example, when they debate with him the calling of the first Reformers; he contents himself with proving, that Ministry is to the Church even in opposition to the Pastours, that it is a right that cannot be alienated, either by the consent of the parties, or by the strongest Law, that is to say, by Usurpation; he adds, that three wills must concur to the forming of a lawfull calling, that of God, that of the Church, and the consent of him to whom

whom the Ministry is directed; he declares that the Ministry that is exercised among *Protestants*, is not an upstart Ministry, because it does not Preach up a new Gospel, but the same which the Apostles settled in the Church, but purg'd from the Errours which ignorance had shed therein. With these maxims does Monsieur *Claude* assert our calling, against all the unjust reproaches of the Church of *Rome*; he clearly shews its Justice and necessity. This Book having these great Characters, it is no wonder, that the publick did with joy receive it, and that it did so much honour to its Authour.

Monsieur *Claude* did in 1676, cause five Sermons to be Printed, which he had Preach'd at *Charenton* the year before, upon the 22th. Chapter of *St. Matthew*, Verse 1, 2, and 3. and the title of these Sermons is the *parable of the Wedding Feast*.

I should be affraid of doing him an injury, if I enter'd upon the particulars of these Sermons, they are too fine and too short for an extract of them to be given in this place, as containing the matter of a vast Volume, and if well scann'd, will afford the profit of a bulky piece, which few Readers run over otherwise than in haste; whereas these Sermons do entertain people of sound Judgment, a mighty stock of Divinity, morals worthy of the Subject he explains, a neatness of expression, so just a way of arguing, with that heat and vivacity, that they must own the Authour, no less fit for the Pulpit than the Study.

Monsieur *Claude* had but one Son, whom he tenderly lov'd, he was very glad to see that his inclinations led him towards the Ministry, and that this choice he made, and which ought to be so free, had answer'd the inclinations of his heart. He had this satisfaction to find in him, a Subject proper to avail himself of his parts and example. He studied in the Academies of *France*, under the best Masters, who took great care of him; he returned to his Father,
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who accomplish'd him in all things, that might make him a perfect Preacher. After which he was examin'd at *Sedan*, in the month of *September* 1678, and judg'd very worthy of being receiv'd into the office of the holy Ministry; he was demanded by the Church of *Clermont* in *Beauvoisis*, fourteen Leagues from *Paris*, in a Synod of the Isle of *France*, and his Father had the comfort of Ordaining of him, on the 9th. of *October* 1678.

Monsieur Claude did more especially excell at the head of a Company; such did he appear for several years together, in the consistory of *Charenton*, such has he been seen in more than one Synod, of the Isle of *France*, wherein he was Moderator; one more especially there was, wherein he gave an instance of the strength of his Genius, which surpris'd the whole Assembly. For after that eight proponents had explain'd the Text he had given them; the Company being taken up with more important concerns, refer'd the examination of those propositions till the next day. This was a troublesome disappointment to the Moderator, who was to make report of those actions to the Synod, but *Monsieur Claude* was not perplex'd at this accident; the day following he call'd to mind all his Ideas, put each in its due place, forgot not so much as one single circumstance, and after he had perform'd the function of a Reporter, he perform'd that of a Judge; he examin'd those eight propositions, and spoke his opinion of them like a Master, though the assembly knew his several Provinces, yet was it charm'd with his memory, knowledge and Judgment. In case, in the Synod, any matters were propos'd that were intricate of themselves, and still more perplexing through the cloud which the ignorance, or devices of the party did occasion; *Monsieur Claude's* wit had such an excellency, that in a moment it made way through all this Chaos, form'd a proposition clear and precise, in order to his speaking his opinion pat, as if opinions were to turn

turn upon a yea or a no, a Character that is never mistaken, in the judging of a man that presides in a Company, since the choice of matters and the making them plain, is a certain sign of the presence, neatness, and strength of a great Genius. But as Monsieur *Claude* was exact in retaining the purity of the Faith, in the tenets of the reformed Religion, which he has so well defended, we may likewise say, that he acted like a wise, and charitable man in regard of the various sentiments which the *Protestants* entertain upon the Subject of Ecclesiastical Government and Discipline, and upon the use of some Ceremonies.

His conduct more especially appear'd, in an answer he made to a Letter of the Bishop of *London's*; this Prelate illustrious by his Birth, and who with so much honour maintains the dignity of that great Office, labour'd under apprehensions, for the divisions with which the Church of *England* was threatned, upon occasion of the Episcopal Government. For the preventing of this mischief, he wrote to some of the most eminent *French* Ministers, that he might have their advice. Monsieur *Claude* made too much noise in *France*, not to be consulted in an affair of this moment; he received a Letter from that Prelate, this was a slippery step, he had the eyes of all the *Protestants* upon him, to see how he wou'd behave himself in so nice a concern; he came off from it with honour, he used a temperament, that was approv'd of by all rational persons, he own'd what is good in the Episcopacy, but he does not dissemble the feebleness of some Prelates, who seem to him too rigid over our calling; we do not see in his Letter, that so decisive majesterial air, which other Writers take upon them, 'tis full of that humble spirit of *Christianity*, which onely breaths Charity and Peace. This Character pleased the Bishop of *London*, who honour'd him with his esteem. Monsieur *Claude* in return was full of acknowledgments,

ments, speaking of that famous Prelate, as of one of the greatest ornaments of the Church of *England*, and pointing him out under the name of the charitable Father, of all those unhappy persons that have taken refuge, who are all comforted in that they can pour forth their sighs, into a bosom, ever open to the complaints and necessities of the miserable; this Letter was written in the year 1680.

In 1683, came forth Monsieur *Claude's* answer to Monsieur *de Meaux's* Book, entitled *A Conference with Monsieur Claude* Minister of *Charenton*, and the occasion which oblig'd him to put it forth was as followeth. Monsieur *Claude* had a Conference with the Bishop of *Condom*, upon the account of *Mademoiselle de Duras*, at the Countess *de Roye's* House, on the first of *March* 1678. Some small time after, that Prelate suffer'd a relation of their Conference to go abroad from out his Cabinet, with a discourse he had made for *Mademoiselle de Duras* upon the matter of the Church; Monsieur *Claude* in his turn, gave one of his Friends another relation of that Conference, with animadversions upon Monsieur *de Condom's* discourse; his Manuscript fell into that Prelate's hands, who entreated a worthy person to know of Monsieur *Claude*, whether he approv'd of that Writing which went abroad under his name. Monsieur *Claude* perused it, to see whether it was conformable to the Original, and having found it exact, he wrote at the bottom that he own'd it for his. This Declaration was given to Monsieur *de Condom*, who made reflexions upon Monsieur *Claude's* animadversions, for the maintaining his discourse of the Church; he likewise made some upon their Conference, and this was the Subject of the Book he caused to be Printed, having for its Title, *A Conference with Monsieur Claude* Minister of *Charenton*.

Monsieur *Claude* fancied he might in this occasion, follow that Prelate's example, wherefore he caused his Book to be Printed, wherein he shews three things, he gives us his answer

swer to Monsieur *de Condom's* discourse, and therein does he handle the question of the Church; he answers the reflexions that Prelate had made upon his Tract; he gives therein a relation of what passed in that Conference, and examines the reflexions of that Prelate, and owns that he gave his cause all the liveliest colours, which the most able Divines of the Church of *Rome* use, when they wou'd cover an errour with the lustre of truth. They parted with marks of a mutual esteem, and with a design not to publish their Conversation, but other considerations prevail'd over Monsieur *de Condom's* mind, and we are oblig'd to him for having first left the bounds they had prescrib'd to themselves. For it gave Monsieur *Claude* occasion to handle the matter of the Church, and to give us a most clear and exact Idea of it. This composure was his Darling, and I may affirm, that he was as much satisfied with it, as with any of those that were the offspring of his Pen; he spoke of it to us, just before his last sickness, he told us he had meditated this question of the Church, with all the application he was capable of, for the giving of it a good light; he found few Authours that had applied themselves as became them in illustrating that matter; he added, that Messieurs *Cameron* and *Mestrezat* were those that had best explain'd it, and that by keeping to the maxims he had stated, one might easily answer all the objections of the Doctours of the Church of *Rome*, without fearing they shou'd stagger his hypotheses.

At first this Conference onely turn'd upon points of Discipline, and upon some small difficulties, touching the submission which individuals ought to have, for the decrees of Ecclesiastical Companies. If this discourse had not been the result of a common Conversation, wherein chance has a greater part than the choice of matters, in

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all likelyhood ^{one} ~~any~~ body might have said, these questions were not worthy of taking up those two great Genius's; but the consequences have so exalted this Subject, that it is the same thing with this dispute, trivial in its beginning, as it is with those small springs, which make no noise at their issuing out of the Earth, and which are to be past dry footed, but which encrease extremely in a long course, often divide the place they water, redound to the utility of commerce, and thereby occasion puzzling work to the Learned, who eagerly dispute about the fundry names that have been given to these Waters, of their invisibility, when the Rivers they form hide themselves in the Earth, of their privileges and of the rights the people have thereto.

The condition of the *Protestants* was such, that the repose of their Lives might with impunity have been interrupted by the peevishness of a bare Vicar, as soon as he might have entertain'd the desire of wearying out a person of our Religion; but it was more especially a Capital Crime in a Minister, to attack the sentiments of a Prelate.

Monsieur *Claude* had more than once experienc'd even in better times, how far the power of these Gentlemen extended in this case, yet did he not fail, as much as in him lay, of crossing the design of the Clergy of *France*, in writing against the Circular Letters that came from that Assembly, which were spread abroad under the authority of its name. He imagin'd that he ow'd the Sacrifice he made them of his rest to his own Conscience, and to the Salvation of his Brethren; for things were then in such a posture, that the bare thought of maintaining our cause, was in the opinion of those Gentlemen, deem'd a kind of Felony as Monsieur *Claude* has publicly shewn, when he explains the result of that

that expression, *whatever you may say or write 'tis all in vain*, * these are the terms of their Letter.

* p. 109.

Monsieur *Claude* does not put his Name to that little Book intituled, *Considerations upon the circular Letters of the Assembly of the Clergy of France, of the year 1682*, because this piece had other Characters enough of its Authour, and that *Christian* prudence does not oblige us to expose our selves, when there is no motive of Conscience that calls us thereunto. The perusal of those reflexions is not long, and to it must I refer the Curious. Possibly Monsieur *Claude* never composed any work that has done him more honour than this, as small as it is; he does not deviate from the terms of a profound respect, when he reflects upon the temporal grandeur of those he speaks of, and to whom he thinks this submission owing. But after this, he takes upon him a true air of greatness, proceeding from the Majesty of the matter he handles; insomuch, that we see him march as an equal with those against whom he disputes, upbraiding them with their affected mildness, undermining the Foundations of an absolute Authority, which they exercise over Souls, and declaring to them roundly, that he onely took Pen in hand to give a reason of his Faith, not that he does herein own them for his Masters, but to render the sentiments of the *Protestants* publick; and the reason he alledges for it is, that Religion and Conscience onely depend immediately on God.*

* p. 163.

Some time after these circular Letters of the Clergy of *France*, were notified after somewhat an extraordinary manner, through all the *Protestant* Churches in the Kingdom. The Intendents of the Provinces had order to convene the Consistories for the reading of them,

them ; they had commonly among others, the Prelates great Vicar, in whose Diocese the Commission was perform'd. As this was a case wholly new, and whose influences created apprehensions, our Churches waited to see what the conduct of *Charenton* wou'd be in this matter, that so they might direct their own course, by its Compass ; this course sped according to their desire ; those of the Consistory of *Charenton* were the first that were spoke to ; Monsieur *Claude* was chosen to answer, he did it with great Prudence and steadiness, and his answer serv'd for a model to most of the other Churches, who were very glad to walk in the steps of so able a guide. This answer was Printed ; 'tis conceiv'd in few words, but full of sense ; Monsieur *Claude* owns the august Character, with which Monsieur the *Intendant* was invested, and for which he declares, that he and his Church have a profound respect ; he therein protests that it was from this onely Fountain of submission, that proceeded the application they had used, in the reading of a piece, that had otherwise nothing but what was afflicting for our Churches ; he farther owns, the mighty Station which my Lords the Prelates stand possess'd of in the Kingdom, by the dignity of their Offices, and that they thereby challenge our respects, but that if they pretended to speak to us in those Letters, as from off an Ecclesiastical tribunal, he was bound in Conscience to declare to them, that on that side we do not at all acknowledge their Authority.

Matters in Religion had their mode in *France* like other things ; that of Grace had for a long while possess'd peoples minds ; Monsieur *Claude's* dispute against Monsieur *Arnaud*, occasion'd the sentiments of grace to be little talk't of. The two parties wrote as if they had onely differ'd upon the single article of the real presence
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of our Lord *Jesus Christ* in the Sacrament of the Lord's supper. This battery had no sooner ceased, but that they erected that of the Authority of the Church, and this seems to be what made the most noise, and on which they most insisted, as seeming to those Gentlemen, of a more efficacious use for conversion, than all the rest together. During these mighty Disputes, there was another kind of calmer Writers, who made *Christian* morals their business, and who ever and anon gave the publick little pieces which it greedily receiv'd, as finding therein wherewithall to recreate it self, from that great application which was necessary to be had for other, the more lofty questions of Divinity.

Monsieur *Claude* knowing that a man of his profession ought to doe all things for all, in order to the Salvation of Souls, took the resolution of writing upon a Subject of Morality, and composed a little Book, whose Title is the examination of ones self, for the being duly prepar'd for the Communion, the first of the *Corinthians*, Chapter the 11th. Verse 28. This is a Tract, wherein man sees himself such as he is, in a faithfull mirrour. Monsieur *Claude* does herein make appear, that he throughly knew the heart of man, no foible is there but he has penetrated; he follows him in all the windings he uses, to conceal himself from God, the World and himself; he takes off that Mask, shews his Nakedness, his Misery, conducts him to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, as to his sovereign good. In the Gospel does he take the Lessons which ought to serve to illustrate and inflame him; he turns all these instructions to the use of the holy Supper. Monsieur *Claude* does farther shew, that he perfectly knew the World, as an able Physician knows Poisons, that is to say, with no other design but to oppose their qualities. These are no outrageous Morals;
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like many others ; they are Just, yet have their severities, but withall, they are ever conformable to the state of man upon Earth, and to his Duty ; and this is what renders them sensible to all the World : Whereas there are those, that often vend us precepts of morality, so above our reach, that they make no impressions upon our hearts, because our hearts do not find in those pourtraits, one single Character that suits with them. This little Book met with a very gracious reception from all sorts of persons, and indeed, it must needs have a most extraordinary privilege of goodness, since it carries in its front a licence of a famous Magistrate of *Paris*, of the 7th. of *November* 1681.

Monsieur Claude's Writings made so much noise in foreign Countries, and especially amongst *Protestants*, that *Groninguen* caused a Professours place in Divinity to be offer'd him in its illustrious University ; and this Town which had so highly signaliz'd it self in those late Wars being still cover'd, if I might dare to say it, with the sweat and blood of its Enemies, imagin'd that for the fulness of its glory, it ought to get this Buckler of the Reformation into its bosom, there to cause Sciences and Religion to flourish. This calling was directed to *Monsieur Claude* in all the forms, and with all the inducements he could desire, but it was a difficult matter in this case, to surprise the vigilance and affection of his Church, which too well knew the need it had of its Pastor. It earnestly intreated him not to abandon it, at a time especially, when his presence was so necessary to all the *Protestants* of the Kingdom ; he was willing to make it the Sacrifice of his temporal interest and repose, after which he most humbly thank't the Magistrates of *Groninguen* for the honour they had done him, and prepared himself to undergo the utmost fury of that Tempest,

Tempest, which had so long been lowring over our heads.

In the mean while, the Calamities of the *Protestants* did daily hasten on apace, the Church that met at *Charenton*, saw the Storm coming, and the privilege of being enlightned by the eyes of the Court, which it had made its support for above an age, was no longer a means to justify its Conduct; it was wholly taken up in warding off the blows made at it by its Enemies; it was watchfull for the other Flocks; and the greatest weight of this heavy burthen lay upon Monsieur *Claude's* head. He shewed himself indefatigable, he answered the Writers of the *Roman* Communion, who ever seem to single out him in their works; he preach't as often as any one of his Collegues, was watchfull for the inward safety, so to disappoint it, rooted it out of others, and was carefull of the present, nay, and out of a providential Spirit, extended his thoughts and cares over the sadest futurity.

This is the true scite of Monsieur *Claude's* heart and mind, till that fatal day, when he perceiv'd that all the solitudes of humane prudence were absolutely unavailable, and that he must of necessity see the dispersion of all the reformed Churches in *France*, by the bare revocation of the Edict of *Nants*, under whose Faith we and our Fathers had liv'd.

This Edict was published under the Seal, on Thursday the 18th. of *December* 1685; the Gentlemen of the Consistory had notice of it, they thereby apprehended, that they had no longer the liberty of Preaching, because the Exercise at *Charenton* was no longer perform'd, but by virtue of a decree of the Council, which was revokt by the bare publication that had been newly made; nevertheless it was not perceiv'd, that
the

the Ecclesiasticks made any step to rob them of that small consolation, which they seem'd to have left of having the liberty of meeting once again in their Temple. This favour which would not have been considerable in the bottom, seem'd too great to the Ministers, and to some of the ^{French} ~~Ancients~~, that they open'd their Eyes to know the motives of it, and after a pretty exact application, they perceiv'd it to be one of those presents, which were to be distrusted, as coming from a suspected hand; they nevertheless liv'd in a kind of uncertainty, till *Saturday* at ten a Clock in the Morning; the Ministers appointed to Preach were ready, when that they were fully inform'd of the design that was laid, of coming into the assembly to speak to the people, during or after the action. The most prudent understood the consequences of that day; Monsieur *Claude* especially knowing by long experience, how far the zeal of Religion does hurry those, that are strongly possess'd with it, was the first that deem'd it fitting not to Preach. He backt his opinion with several reasons, which brought the rest to be of his mind. It was expedient to hinder the people from repairing to *Charenton*, the next day Monsieur *Claude* took care of this important matter, he saw plainer than the rest the peril he expos'd himself to; but he imagin'd that he was likewise thereunto called by the duty of his Office. That a good Soul ought not to be much concern'd, for the dangerous consequences of a good Counsell. He gave all the necessary orders, the thing succeeded according to his project, there was no Preaching at *Charenton*, and the event justified that his foresight was well grounded, that his fears were Just, and that this turn he gave to the Rudder of a great Ship, that was going to be wrack't, ^{came} ~~departed~~ from the head of a most able Pilot, who contriv'd to save the

the people whom God had committed to his charge, when he cou'd no longer hinder the wreck of his Vessel.

This Cessation of exercise, which had seem'd too hastily to some, past for a Masterly stroke in the opinion of others. The *Ecclesiasticks* knew it immediately, to be Monsieur *Claude* that had broke their measures, and to prevent the over officious cares he might have rendered to his dispersed Flock, they wou'd, said they, spare him the pains of that sad spectacle. He had fifteen days time given him, as well as the other Ministers to depart the Kingdom, they found means to abridge that time; for on *Monday* the 22 of *December* 1685, which was the day on which the revocative Edict of that of *Nants*, was Registred in the Parliament of *Paris*; Monsieur *Claude* received order at ten a Clock in the Morning, to be gone within four and twenty hours. He obey'd with a profound respect, and went away attended by one of the King's-Footmen, who was to conduct him to the Frontiers of *France*, and who faithfully perform'd his Commission, and yet did nevertheless carry himself very handsomly towards Monsieur *Claude*; so true it is, that great merit has an ascendant over those very hearts, that do not love our Religion.

P A R T III.

Monsieur *Claude* was not at a loss, what foreign Countrey to chuse for his retreat, his Son being Minister of the *Walloon* Church at the *Hague*, byast him above all other prospects that offer'd themselves to his mind. At *Paris* he took Coach for *Brussels*, his fame leading the way, occasion'd several persons to visit him in his Journey; he past through *Cambray* where he lay, was there presented with what was in season by the *Jesuits*; the Father Rector did him the honour to come and see him, he made due returns to his Civility, and the diversity of Religion did not interrupt that commerce of Compliments, and instances of a mutual esteem. At last he arriv'd at the *Hague*, and the satisfaction he had to be in the bosom of his Family, whom the affairs of the time had separated, made him for some moments, forget the peril he had been in, and the remains of a great fit of sickness.

In a few days after, he had the honour to pay his respects to his Highness the Prince of *Orange*, he found that his merit had spoken in his behalf, he met with a gracious reception, and however great the Idea was, which Monsieur *Claude* had conceiv'd of his Highness, he own'd that fame, which commonly encreases objects, and which had spoken with so much luster of his Life, had

had not as yet, had Voice sufficient to Trumpet all the Heroick Vertues of that August Prince.

Monsieur *Claude* knew her Royal Highness the Princess of *Orange*, to be a great and illustrious support of Religion, that she understands it in its source, and that a lively impression is seen of it in her actions. He was desirous likewise to kiss her hand, he had that honour, and confess that he had never seen so enlightned an understanding, with so much Piety and Majesty united together.

Monsieur *Claude* did likewise pay his respects to persons of a very considerable figure in that State, and he could not sufficiently admire the sweetness and goodness of those illustrious heads, who at the coming out of their assemblies, where they have appear'd invested with the Majesty of a Sovereign State, speak and act a moment after with other men like private persons, and as if they were their fellow Citizens.

Monsieur *Claude* was no sooner arriv'd at the *Hague*, but that the Elector of *Brandenburg* did him the honour to think of him, in order to get him into his Territories. This great Prince, whose bare name will be a perfect *Encomium* throughout all ages, caused an honourable and usefull employment in his profession to be offered him; but particular reasons hindred him from complying, so as he could have wish't, to this calling. The rest of his days were destin'd by the Providence of God, to these happy Provinces, and this potent State was willing he should share in that rich effusion of its Charity, which began to pour upon the Ministers that had here taken refuge, nay, he was distinguish't from all the rest by a most advantageous portion, and all concur'd to doe him good. The Prince of *Orange* took delight in ex-

ercising his generous liberality towards him by a considerable Pension.

After so many troubles, the time now seem'd to be come, for Monsieur *Claude* to enjoy all imaginable quiet at the *Hague*. Nevertheless it is certain, that he was never less to himself, than when one would have thought he was the Master of his repose. His House was the refuge of all the Unfortunate, oblig'd he was to hear their Lamentations, and ease their grief as much as in him lay. His dispersed Flock daily presented fresh objects to his eyes, but sad; and like so many Planks that had escap'd Shipwrack. He received those that were expos'd to temptation, was oblig'd to answer them, was inform'd that others were fall'n under it, and this was for him a matter of affliction and labour, to raise up these infirm persons again from their fall.

The last work of Monsieur *Claude* is of a different Character from the rest, his little Book is so known by its self and its adventures, that I should be affraid of abusing the Readers leisure, if I went about to insert the particulars in this place.

The Elector of *Brandenburg* being at *Cleve*, Monsieur *Claude* had the honour to pay him his respects, his Electoral Highness exprest to him the particular esteem he had for his merit, he was desirous to hear him Preach, and accordingly he Preacht in his Palace, at two a Clock in the afternoon, upon these words, the 2 to the *Corinthians*. Chap. 5. ver. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature: old things are past away, behold all things are become new.* His Electoral Highness seem'd extreamly well satisfied with his Sermon, and utter'd his mind accordingly in terms most obliging to its Authour. Monsieur *Claude* return'd to the *Hague*, possess'd with the glory of that great Prince, who may serve for a Model

Model to the most perfect Heroe's, if it be possible that there is any one that imitates him, in the exercise of that immense Charity, which he at this day bestows upon so many unhappy persons, and which bears all the marks of the holy fervency of the Primitive and happy days of *Christianity*.

After Monsieur *Claude* was return'd, we wou'd needs know of him the means that were to be used for the reuniting the *Protestants*, call'd of the Confession of *Augsbourg* with those of our Communion. He said that in all probability this reunion wou'd not be a work of disputation, which commonly onely serves to exasperate peoples minds; that we had reason to praise God, that there were no tenets essential to Salvation, that divided this holy house of the Lord, and that the shortest and safest way must be a wise temperament, which it wou'd be easie to find out, if all parties wou'd concur to this good work, and lay in a stock of reciprocal Charity, as might reconcile peoples minds, and unite their hearts in order to the framing one and the same Communion, without declaiming against each other. He was more especially of opinion, that the piety of Sovereign Potentates ought to be excited in this occasion, and that their zeal for this peace, wou'd be a mighty help for the accomplishment of this important design. This overture, which we made to Monsieur *Claude* was again a new Subject of admiration for him, in expressing to us the sentiments of the Elector of *Brandenburg* upon this matter, for he told us that this great Prince had discoursed him about this reunion with so much zeal, that he was persuaded, that if this piece was to be a present from Heaven in our days, Divine Providence would principally make use of his Electoral Highness, to whom this glory seem'd to be reserv'd as to the Prince, who can best second

cond this project with his own enlightned understanding, and with his sincere and ardent piety, known and respected by both parties.

Now for some time, Monsieur *Claude* had not enjoyed a perfect health, he was fixt to study so as he would have wisht, but his body could not therein follow the motions of his heart, yet did he not love to have his Study interrupted in the Morning; he bestowed the rest of the day upon all those that were minded to see him. The time after Supper was reserv'd for his particular Friends, who took a most profitable delight in seeing and hearing him at those hours of freedom, and in those easie conversations, we saw perfect Monsieur *Claude* discoursing with great openness of heart upon all matters, and especially of that great revolution which is seen at this day in our concerns. His Character upon this Subject was humble and submissive to the Providence of God; he ador'd its steps; but also said that they were abysses, which were not to be too much sounded; that the safest course was to avail our selves of this Judgment of God, and in silence to expect the assistance of his grace; these conversations ever ended, with the usual exercises of piety in his Family.

After this manner did Monsieur *Claude* see the days of his sad exile run out till his last sickness, whose dolefull remembrance we must renew in this place. There was no regular exercise for preaching in the *Walloo* Church at the *Hague*, he nevertheless Preach't there now and then with so much edification, that in ending his Sermon, he excited in the minds of his Auditours a passionate longing to hear him again; and it was to gratifie that desire, that he resolv'd to Preach on *Christmas* day the 25th. of *December* 1686. His Son was gone abroad that day, he supplied his place, the circumstance of the season

season determin'd him upon the choice of the matter, 'twas requisite to speak of the Saviour of the Worlds Nativity; for that purpose did he chuse these words of the Gospel according to St. *Luke*, Chapter the 1. verse the 30, 31, &c. *And the Angel said unto her fear not Mary, for thou hast found favour with God, and behold thou shalt conceive in thy Womb, and bring forth a Son and shalt call his name Jesus, he shall be great, he shall be call'd the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David, and he shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no end.* This Sermon was very Learned, passages it had of extraordinary perfection, his fancy ever fruitfull and happy, appear'd as much in this occasion, as in any other of his Life. It afforded that turn so fine and so natural, which he knew how to give to the matters he explain'd; flathes there were, that did in no wise betray the driness and heaviness of old Age; and we may say in short, that there was throughout observ'd that grandeur of Spirit which influences all his works; that so lively penetration, that so wise, so judicious a choice, which made the ruling Character of that incomparable Genius. He utter'd this Sermon with great eagerness, was heated and inflamed, and in all probability, this was the first point of that fatal sickness which bereft the World of him. His whole Auditory was charm'd with his action, Her Royal Highness the Princess of *Orange*, who is no less Illustrious, for the vast extent of her understanding, and a solid piety and without pomp, than through the blood of so many Kings, whence she derives her extraction, listen'd to this Preacher, with a most steady application of mind, and was extreamly well satisfied with this his performance.

It

It were to be wisht that this Sermon was Publish'd; Monsieur *Claude* told us, he had writ the greatest part of it; I am perswaded his Son wou'd oblige many people, if he caused it to be Printed as it is, being a fragment that wou'd doe much honour to his Father's memory.

Monsieur *Claude* was no sooner at home, but that he found himself extraordinary weary; he was seiz'd that Evening with a most violent Rhume, spent the Night with some uneasiness, and on the Morrow would have gone and heard the Sermon, whatever endeavours were used by his Family, to hinder him from stirring abroad in that condition. That Night he had a Fever with pains throughout his whole Body, his Distemper was thought to be a Rhumatism; upon this principle did they prescribe for his Recovery, but the humours were in so very great a ferment, that there was no moderating the course of them by any Remedy. On the 6th. of *January*, he was prest by most sensible pains, he was sensible of the decay of his Senses, and as if he had had a full knowledge, that he shou'd not ever have the liberty of expressing his thoughts; he told his Son that he desir'd to speak with me, I repair'd immediately to his House, and in the presence of his Family, he told me his mind in these terms.

I was desirous said he to me, to see you, and make my Declaration before you; I am, added he, a miserable sinner before God; I most heartily beseech him to shew me mercy, for the sake of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and I hope he will hear my Prayer, being the promise he made to repenting Sinners. I have reason to praise him for the blessing he has laid upon my Ministry, which has not been fruitless in his Church, which is an effect of his grace, for which I adore his Providence.

He

He took a little breath, and it was to tell us, that he had with great application examin'd all Religions, but had found none worthy of the Wisdom of God, and capable to lead a man to true happiness, save the *Christian* Religion. He then added, that among the divers sentiments, which divide *Christians* upon the Subject of Religion, which he had carefully Studied, he had found that the Reformed Religion was the onely good Religion which was to be followed; that it was entirely found in the word of God; that this was the Fountain from whence it was to be deriv'd; and that this Religion was as it were the Trunk and Body of the Tree, to which it became us to keep steady without ever forsaking it. This is my opinion said he to me, and I was willing to declare it to you.

I wou'd have told him, that I was not surpriz'd to hear him discourse in these terms, towards the end of his days, after what he had taught the publick by his Books, which had been of so great an Edification to the Church. Let us break off there said he to me, and let us not speak of praises at a time when moments are so precious, and when they ought to be employed to a better use. Here we let fall the Conversation, for that I perceiv'd his pains prest him, and that he askt to be put to Bed.

A very worthy person, and one of his intimate and ancient Friends, wou'd needs pass that Night, being Monday the 6th. of *January*, in his Chamber, that he might do him some small Services. His pains were most advantageously rewarded; he had the opportunity of hearing him discourse of the happiness of those that had left *France* for Religion. He made the application of it to him; he besought him, he exhorted him as a Pastour and as a Friend, to enjoy that Privilege, as a blessing which cannot be sufficiently valued.

The following days nature seem'd to make an utmost effort to bring him off. He complain'd of a great pain in the Arm that was free, 'twas thought to be a spice of the Gout; he was a pretty while in this pain, and we in hopes through this new Distemper, which in all likelihood wou'd save his Life. But his Strength decaying through the raging of the Fever, and the length of the Disease, did not help nature in that indication it shew'd us; I often saw him, and began to despair of his recovery on *Friday*, because I perceiv'd he was threatned with a *Delirium*, which was a thing we most dreaded.

His Wife askt him if he was not sorry to leave her; no, answered he, because I am going to my God, and I leave you in his hands in a free Countrey; what can I desire more either for you or for my self?

On *Saturday* in the Evening, Monsieur *Claude* wou'd needs Write to the Prince of *Orange*, he made use of the hand of one of his Friends, for that his own was too weak; this Letter was short and conformable to his Condition, it exprest the State of his mind and heart, in those last moments of his Life. He sign'd it with some trouble, his Highness receiv'd it, and that great Prince, who ever places the concern of Religion in the first rank of so many other important matters, which depend upon his Conduct, understood the loss the Church was going to have; and all Hero as he is, he was sensible upon perusing it of his being a man as well as we; it thereby also appear'd, that he valued and lamented the dying person, and shar'd deep in an affliction common to so many good Souls.

On *Monday* Morning, Monsieur *Claude* askt to speak with his Son, as soon as he was come to him, he embrac'd him tenderly, and said, I am leaving you my Son, the time of my departure is at hand. His Son wou'd have

have told him, that his Distemper was not yet desperate; but he replied, I have no hopes save in the mercy of God; that is my principal Sanctuary, take it also for your self my Son, and never take any other.

Presently after, seeing that Monsieur *Claude* grew weaker, I askt him whether he wou'd give his blessing to his Family, who requir'd it of him through my Mouth; most willingly answered he, immediately his Wife fell upon her knees by his Bed-side, and he spoke to her in these terms; My Wife, I have always tenderly loved you; be not afflicted at my Death; the Death of the Just is sweet and precious before God; in you have I seen the sentiments of a sincere Piety; I praise God for it; be constant in serving him with your whole heart; he will bless you; I recommend my Son and his Family to you, and beseech the Lord to bless you.

His Son kneeling by his Mother, did likewise ask his blessing, Monsieur *Claude* who lov'd him as a Father, though he liv'd with him as a Brother, exprest great Joy at this Request, and made him answer; My Son, I have observ'd in you two Characters, which have mightily pleased me, that of an honest man, and that of a man of Honour, maintain these Characters to the last. You have chosen the right side; perform your Office as a good Pastour, and God will bless you; I recommend your Mother to you; love her, respect her; I am persuaded you will not fail in this, and that she will make you futable returns. Be mindfull, added he, of this Domestick, take care that she want nothing as long as she lives; I give you my blessing. Hereupon these two afflicted persons had not the power to make him an answer, their tears and silence spoke for them.

I crav'd his blessing for my self, he was affected and wearied, yet did he give it me according to my desire.

After that I said Prayers, he bid me be short, and alledg'd this reason for it, I am under that oppression said he, that I am not capable of applying my mind at this moment, to more than these two great truths, to the Meditation of the mercy of God, and to the Graces of the holy Spirit. That is a great deal, Sir, said I to him, they are two most abundant Fountains of Comfort for you; I pray'd God for him, and then it was thought fitting we should leave him to his rest.

After the Sermon in the Morning, they pray'd for him in the Church, but without naming him. At Noon Monsieur *Menard* and Monsieur *Jaquelot* came to see Monsieur *Claude*; Monsieur *Menard* had been his Colleague at *Paris*. After some short discourse upon Monsieur *Claude*'s Sickness, said Monsieur *Claude* to Monsieur *Menard*, pray, Sir, let's talk of things more important, and more available for me, I am in a State of Death, but I hope that God will grant me mercy, for the sake of our Lord *Jesus Christ* his Son, who is my onely Justice; Monsieur *Menard* seconded this thought, which Monsieur *Claude* had started, and Monsieur *Claude*'s pangs coming thick upon him, this conversation ended with a Prayer.

Monsieur *Jaquelot* exprest to Monsieur *Claude* his concern at his illness, to which Monsieur *Claude* made answer after a very handsome and *Christian* Manner, in praying God to bless him.

Monsieur *Carre* came into his Room at one a Clock, as soon as Monsieur *Claude* saw him, he told him that his last hour was drawing on, and that in a little time, his Son would be without a Father, but that he besought him that he wou'd be a Father to his Son.

Monsieur *Carre* told him that he had an esteem for his Son, that he lov'd him and should serve him in all he could,

could; that they were Collegues, and that onely Death should part them. Monsieur *Claude* the Father thank't him, declar'd he died satisfied, and was very intent upon the Prayer which Monsieur *Carre* made for him.

Though Monsieur *Claude* had not been nam'd after the Morning Sermon, the report of the danger he was in, was immediately spread about the Church, and the affection people had for him, with their pity and fear, drew a world of people to his House; more especially I found there several Ladies of his acquaintance, and Gentlemen, who exprest how desirous they were, to hear Monsieur *Claude* speak and receive his blessing: I approv'd of their desires, but added, that it would be a hard matter to procure them that consolation, because his Head was not at liberty to talk long together; they nevertheless urg'd me to make the proposal of it, I accordingly did so, and that too immediately, telling him what was desir'd of him; I added, that the last words of a man of his Character and Merit, would edifie as much as several Sermons, and that he owed this Succour to the Zeal and Calamities of those good Souls that requir'd this comfort of him; a God's name replied he, this desire is Just; appoint a fitting time for it which you know best, and which accordingly was immediately appointed, but he was no longer in a condition to speak, he had had a *Delirium*, which did not allow him the liberty of prosecuting a discourse, in such a manner as might have been expected of him.

He was again pray'd for in the Church, in the Afternoon Service, and it was thought convenient he should be named. Monsieur *Arbuse* Preaching at that time, said before he enter'd upon his Prayer, that there was one of our Brethren that deserv'd to be lamented by all good people, that it was Monsieur *Claude*, that they were to
pray

pray God for him, the whole Congregation seem'd much concern'd at this name; Monsieur *Arbuse* pray'd to God with great zeal, was herein accompanied by the whole Church, which could not forbear weeping before hand, for the loss they were going to have.

After five a Clock at the Evening Sermon, Monsieur *Du Vivie* pray'd God for Monsieur *Claude*, he insisted a pretty while upon this point, his grief and zeal excited likewise the grief and zeal of the Congregation which dissolv'd into tears.

At nine a Clock Monsieur *Du Vivie* came to see him; as soon as he drew near his Bed, Monsieur *Claude* gave him his blessing; you have prevented my wishes said Monsieur *Du Vivie* to him, I had a design to ask you your blessing; God confirm it to you, Monsieur *Claude* made him answer. Some time after Monsieur *Du Vivie* told him, that it became him to think of a perfect Justice, that may serve before the Tribunal of God, where he was going to appear, and that he knew very well that this Justice was onely to be found in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who was made to us by God, Wisdom, Justice, Sanctification, and Redemption; that's all my hopes answered Monsieur *Claude*, he added this passage at length, *I know in whom I have believed, &c.* After which Monsieur *Du Vivie* said Prayers, which the sick-man lissen'd to with great attention.

Half an hour after, Monsieur *Du Vivie* askt him whether he did not find, that his Condition had some affinity with the 73 Psalm. *My flesh faileth and mine heart also, but God is the strength of mine heart and my Portion for ever.*

Monsieur *Claude* rais'd up his Voice and said twice Amen, Amen; he gave his blessing to some persons of his acquaintance that askt it of him; there was especially a deserving young Lady, who askt him whether he would impart

impart his blessing to her as well as to the rest, why should I not give it you he answered her, I have seen evident instances of your discretion and piety, I pray God to bless you.

Monsieur *Claude* falling into a Slumber, his Son wakt him from time to time, to give him Consolation; 'twas done in few words, he being too weak to prosecute a long discourse, he askt him if he did not place all his confidence in the death of his Saviour, yes Son replied he, our Lord *Jesus Christ* is my onely Justice, I need no other, he is all-sufficient. I askt him whether he was not much pleas'd in being thus comforted by his Son, I am very well satisfied he replied, let him continue, I said Prayers and staid with him till eleven a Clock.

On *Monday* the 13th. of *January*, a sad day for us, I was call'd up at five a Clock in the Morning, to go see Monsieur *Claude*, who was become extraordinary weak; I spoke to him but little, he being in great Agonies occasion'd by pains in his Stomach. At ten a Clock I drew near his Bed, and seeing him in a quieter condition, I askt him whether he knew me; yes said he to me, with a voice pretty strong; you are my Pastour; my whole recourse is to the mercy of God, I expect a better life than this, help me to fortifie me in the exercise of meditation and Prayer. Notwithstanding his pains, finding him constant in his pious inclinations, I took upon me the right of his Pastour, that he had conferr'd upon me; I spoke to him of the sinfulness of mankind, and of the riches of the grace of God, that have appear'd in the Death of our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, and I exhorted him to place his whole confidence in the Death of that good Saviour. These few words excited his piety, he gave us most sensible testimonies of his Repentance, and of the stedfast Faith he had in our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, and in
this

this happy moment did I also apply that so precious Balm, which our Saviour *Jesus Christ* has put into our hands, for the consolation of repenting Sinners. Be assur'd said I to him, Brother, that your Sins are forgiven you, through the mercy of God, I declare it to you in the name of our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, who has given us a Commission for so doing; and I beseech him that he wou'd ratifie it to you, by the sentiment of your own Conscience, this Declaration which he listen'd to attentively afforded him mighty Joy; I am persuaded said he to me, that God will hear the sighs of my Soul, and your discourses; let us beseech him so to doe, by the Prayers I beg you would make in my behalf, accordingly we fell upon our knees and I pray'd God for him.

At two a Clock in the Afternoon, there was no longer any connexion in Monsieur *Claude's* discourse, nay, and we avoided engaging him to speak, for fear of augmenting his *Delirium*; We pray'd often for him in that interval. At five a Clock, he had somewhat a violent Potion given him for to rouse his Spirits, but all ineffectually. At seven a Clock, he became still much weaker, yet did he still hear, but was become speechless. I bid him give me a sign whether he understood me, and that he should give me his hand; accordingly he reach't it to me, I took his hand, and said these words of the 31. *Psalms* to him. *Into thine hand I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me O Lord God of Truth*; at these words he prest my hand, and struggl'd to raise his head, I continued to exhort him and said Prayers.

Monsieur *Arbuffle* came to see him, and pray'd by him, for he was so weak, and his senses so spent, that Prayer was the onely assistance he could receive from us. This exercise lasted till half an hour past Eleven at Night. On the 13th. of *January* 1687, Monsieur *Menard* and I did
not

not stir from his Bed-side till his last gasp, when we saw him calmly expire at that time, and restored his Soul into the hands of God.

Thus Lived, and thus Died *John Claude* in his 68 year, after having so worthily perform'd his Office, for the space of forty two years or thereabouts; he was by nature quick and lively, but submissive to reason and faith; he was Civil, Modest, Illuminated, wise in his Councells, a true Friend, officious without being troublesome, charitable but with choice, and much concern'd for the evils the Church labour'd under. He understood the World, shrifted into intreagues, and improv'd all these lights to the repose of the Flocks of the Lord. He had a sagacious Wit, a vast Imagination, a nice Judgment, a just Choice; his expression was clear, sprightly and strong; his knowledge had past the test of Meditation, he had fram'd an easie platform of all matters of his Profession; each object came in its due place, as soon as he spoke or writ, and all this was maintain'd with an exact method and mighty beauty of Language. He was a learned Divine, a great Preacher, an able and zealous defender of the Reformation, a rigid observer of our confession of Faith, an enemy of all such sentiments as might have disturb'd the peace of the Church, and the purity of Religion, and to the regulations of our Discipline. He was of easie access, of frank and fluent Conversation, and all these great qualities were season'd with such profound humility, that when he spoke, he seem'd to forget what he was, to fit his discourse to the meanest understandings. In *France* he liv'd belov'd by his Friends, esteem'd by his Adversaries, and his name which has past with so much lustre into foreign Countries, has there gain'd the admiration of those very people, who did not love his Religion, and ever will be had in veneration in the Church.

These Characters are to be seen in the works he has given us; and if his Son will farther enrich the publick as is hop'd with other Writings, that have not yet seen the light, they will furnish us with new strokes, to render the portraict of this great man the more accomplisht. For to have an Heroick Idea of him, we must study him and his works.

Remember them which have the oversight of you, which have declared unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering what hath been the end of their Conversation. Hebrews Chapter the 13th. Verse the 7th.

FINIS.
